The Christian Sunday

Right Rev. Alfred Barry, D.D.

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THE CHRISTIAN SUNDAY

THE
CHRISTIAN SUNDAY

ITS HISTORY, ITS SACREDNESS, AND ITS BLESSING

FOUR LECTURES

BY THE

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PREFACE

THESE Lectures were delivered in substance in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, last July, in discharge of my duty as Divinity Lecturer on the foundation of Queen Elizabeth. Being addressed to an ordinary congregation, they make no claim to an academic exhaustiveness of treatment, or to any novelty of speculation or discovery. They simply aim at making some slight contribution to the study of a subject, which is at this moment engaging the attention and, I may add, the anxious consideration of all thoughtful Christian men. That subject has been, I know, treated in times past and present with the fulness which its importance demands, and urged with much earnestness of exhortation, in view of the special difficulties and hindrances now besetting the right observance of the Lord's Day. But yet it appeared to me that for the many, who cannot well enter into serious historical and theological investigation, and who yet desire to be able to find, and to give, a reason for their faith in the time-honoured observance of the Lord's Day, there might be some value in a

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simple statement in short compass of the growth of that observance in the Church, its relation to the Sabbath Law of the Fourth Commandment, and to the principles of special worship and rest which the latter embodies, and which it has stamped upon the Christian life through all the centuries. For it is only by some knowledge of these things that we can intelligently maintain the sacredness of our Christian Sunday, not only in abstract theory, but in practical adaptation to the conditions and the needs of our English life, espeeially in days like our own, which demand so urgently, on this matter as on many others, an obedience not so much to the letter as to the spirit of the Divine Law.

Feeling as I do the unspeakable importance of the hallowing of the Lord's Day for the Christian life, the priceless blessing of its rest, the infinite value of its consecration to worship, I shall be deeply thankful if I can succeed in suggesting any considerations, which may stimulate and guide some thoughtful and prayerful study of the things which so deeply concern our peace. Our prayer must be first, that "we may both perceive and know what things we ought to do," and then, "that we may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same."

A. B.

The Cloisters,
Windsor Castle,
December 1904.

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"As Thou didst rest, O Father, o'er nature's finished birth,
As Thou didst in Thy work rejoice, and bless the new-born earth,
So give us now that Sabbath-rest, which makes Thy children free—
Free for the work of love to man, of thankfulness to Thee.

But in Thy worship, Father, Oh lift our souls above,
By holy word, by prayer and hymn, by Eucharistic love;
Till e'en the dull cold work of earth, the earth which Christ hath trod,
Shall be itself a silent prayer, to raise us up to God.

So lead us on to heaven, where in Thy Presence blest
The wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest,
Where faith is lost in vision, where love hath no alloy,
And through eternity there flows the deepening stream of joy.

To Thee, Who giv'st us freedom, our Father and our King;
To Thee, the risen Lord of life, our ransomed spirits sing;
Thou fill'st the Church in earth and heaven, O Holy Ghost;—to Thee
In warfare's toil, in victory's rest, eternal glory be. Amen."

THE CHRISTIAN SUNDAY

LECTURE I

THE SABBATH OF THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

The urgent importance of the question of Sunday Observance, both in itself and in its relation to our modern Christian life—The need of inquiry into its history and principle—(A) Its relation to the old Sabbath Law—The question of a primeval Sabbath—The Fourth Commandment, and its place in the Moral Law—Its special application to Israel as a seal of the Covenant enforced by strict Law—Its general application to all humanity as a following of "the rest" of the Creator—(B) The whole scope of the Commandment as ordaining mingled work and rest—"Moral" in its idea, "Positive" in its method—A Law at once of restraint and protection of humanity—Our Lord's teaching, as Son of Man, and as Son of God, on the true principle of the Sabbath—(C) The special emphasis on rest, out of which religious observance of the Sabbath naturally grew, and remained for a time in the Christian Church—The growth of the idea of a religious rest as connected with the worship of the Lord's Day—(D) The extension of the Sabbath Law to Festal Celebration and to private devotion—The preservation of its idea as universal and permanent.

THE consideration, within the space of four lectures, of "the Christian Sunday, its history, its sacredness, and its blessing," can only be a

"short study on a great subject." It is indeed a subject of singular historical and speculative interest. But I have ventured to touch upon it, not in any learned and exhaustive investigation, but in the broad general aspects, in which it appeals to all serious and thoughtful Christians, because it is at this moment a subject of urgent practical importance. It is not a little significant that on a recent Sunday (June 29, 1904), in some seventy churches in London, public attention was earnestly called to it, in connection with a remarkable lay-movement of witness and resolution—witness to the sacredness of the observance of the Lord's Day as a day of public worship and rest—resolution to guard that observance as far as possible, by example and influence, against all infringement.[1]

[1] The Resolution, inaugurating this movement, passed unanimously at a preliminary Meeting of Clergy and Laity, was the following :—

"Believing, as we do, that the great principles which underlie the due observance of Sunday are Public Worship and Rest, we resolve to do all that we can to discourage, as far as possible, such employments on Sundays as would prevent either ourselves, our servants, or others for whom we are responsible, from being able to carry out these principles."

It was added :

"In explanation of this resolution it should be stated that its supporters recognize that different circumstances, in which different individuals are placed, render it impossible to suggest any precise rules as to what occupations are appropriate to

The movement itself was an absolutely spontaneous movement from many hundreds of laymen of station and culture, representing various schools of thought; and their invitation to deal with the great principles of the subject from the pulpits of the churches was gladly accepted by many leading preachers, from the two Archbishops downwards. For such a movement there was grave cause. No one can doubt, on the one hand, that the English Sunday has been a leading force in the formation of the whole character, and especially the moral and religious character, of our people—truly described by a great foreign theologian of the last generation (Dr. Döllinger), as (with the English Bible) a "Sacrament" of the higher Christian life of our country. No one, on the other hand, can fail to observe that the old quiet and solemn observance of the Sunday has been, and is being, seriously

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the Lord's Day; but its supporters desire to arouse public opinion, and especially the opinion of the leisured and wealthier classes, to the need of so regulating their Sunday occupations that they should be of as simple a character as possible, in order that all Servants and Subordinates may have as little work as is practicable on that day, and may have the opportunity of attending Divine Service.

"It should be remembered that the indirect influence and effect of example in this matter are incalculable."

The published list of those adhering to this Resolution included more than 650 names of Laymen, besides those of 16 Heads of Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, and 75 Head Masters of Public Schools. I believe that the number of adhesions has since considerably increased.

impaired in modern practice, in both the higher and lower grades of our English society—set aside, too often (like so many other old and wholesome conventions) by mere impatience of restraint, and perhaps through reaction against over-rigid exaggeration in the past, but not infrequently through doubt and hesitation, as to its true meaning and authority, characteristic of the present unsettled condition of religious thought. The Encyclical Letter of the great Lambeth Conference of 1887 uttered on this subject an emphatic warning, all the more impressive from its grave sobriety of tone—"The due observance of Sunday as a day of rest, of worship, and of religious teaching has a direct bearing on the moral well-being of the Christian community. We have observed of late a growing laxity which threatens to impair its sacred character. We strongly deprecate this tendency. . . . In the Lord's Day we have a priceless heritage. Whoever misuses it incurs a terrible responsibility." No one, I fear, who has watched the course of events since this warning was uttered, can doubt that the need of it has most seriously increased. I cannot wonder that in solemn Church gatherings it has been repeated again and again.

What, under these circumstances, are we to think and to do?

The essential gravity of this change of thought and practice in relation to Sunday observance lies in its significance as an indication of the general

moral and spiritual condition of our English society at this present time. It is, I fear, impossible not to trace in that condition two dangerous tendencies. First, a tendency to restlessness of temper, impatient of restraint on self-indulgence, greedy of sensation and excitement, and so incapable of true repose. Next, a tendency—perhaps in reaction from the earnestness of the religious revivals, given us by God's mercy in the nineteenth century—towards a certain secularisation of thought and life, incapable of fervent and thoughtful devotion. Of these tendencies, the growing neglect of a sacred day of rest and worship is but a sign, although perhaps the most striking sign. If, therefore, we desire to go to the root of the matter, it is against these tendencies, and against the unsettlement of religious faith, which fosters both, that we have to bear our chief witness in God's Name; and to pray earnestly for that fresh outpouring of the Spirit of God, which alone can make our witness effective, against the religious indifference, speculative and practical, which is our chief present danger. If only that prayer be granted—if He, as the Spirit of Truth, guide our faith, through all the perplexities and controversies which beset us, to a firmer footing upon the Rock of Ages, and, as the Spirit of Love, quicken our souls to a loving enthusiasm of devotion and worship—then, no doubt, the observance of the Lord's Day will naturally reassert itself, more

intelligently, perhaps, but not less fervently than before.

But while, as I have said, the root of the matter is undoubtedly here, yet at the same time it is well to plead for the observance in itself, to study the authority on which it rests, and to examine the difficulties, which seem at this moment to militate against it. For no one who knows human nature will doubt that such observance is of infinite value, in guiding and helping that very advance or revival of the inner spiritual earnestness, which we so keenly desire. A sacred law, rightly understood and reverently followed, must always serve not only as a safeguard, but as an education, of the spirit. If we can be sure that the Sunday observance rests in any sense on Divine institution, then it is clear that we may well dwell expressly and with all earnestness upon its obligation; and it is equally clear that for this purpose we must endeavour to study its true character, and bring out the spiritual principles which it enshrines.

Under our present conditions it would be vain to fall back on time-honoured tradition and custom, sanctioned by Church authority, and still more vain to appeal to the old formal laws of restriction, which we have inherited from our forefathers, and which (like many other wholesome regulations) are, if freely and wisely carried out, guardians rather than enemies of true liberty. For while the province of law, in respect of our material and social life, is

being considerably extended, yet the scope of its application to our moral life—domestic, national, ecclesiastical—is being narrowed day by day. The present tendency to "lawlessness," which is a cause of grave anxiety to all who read the signs of the times, is, I cannot but think, the fruit not merely of self-will and self-indulgence, but of vagueness in conception of the permanent principles, which old laws were designed to guard, and consequent doubt as to the degree in which such laws are applicable to our own times. In this matter, accordingly, as in others, we must endeavour to go down below the requirements of law, which must necessarily vary with time (if not in their formal enactment, at least in their practical application), to the unchanging principles on which they rest.

Still less use is there in simple complaint and denunciation of laxity, even where they are well deserved. There is wisdom in Carlyle's sarcastic advice to those who are troubled in spirit, and stirred by natural and righteous indignation, "to stop shrieking and inquire," although, by the way, there is some use in shrieking, in order to startle men to attention. While, therefore, we would plead with men with all the gravity and even vehemence which the vital importance of the subject demands, it is well, at the same time, to make such thoughtful inquiry—to see not only the evil which we deplore, but the causes from which it

proceeds, and the lessons which it suggests to ourselves.

(A) Now in that inquiry we shall find it best, in accordance with our modern practice in all lines of thought, to follow the historical line of investigation, and to trace out, so far as we may, the actual growth in the Christian Church of the Sunday festival of weekly rest and worship.

But in our inquiry we cannot but go back in some degree to pre-Christian times. We have certainly inherited the observance of a weekly festival, in fact, although, as we shall see, with marked difference of idea and character, from the older covenant with Israel. To call the Sunday, as has so often been done, although only in the later Christian centuries, "the Christian Sabbath," and to imagine, without, so far as I can see, any real historical evidence whatever, that by Apostolic authority the law of the Sabbath was definitely transferred to the Lord's Day, is a plain historical error, which, as usual, brings with it error of idea and perversion of practice. But yet there is in it just this element of truth, that what the Sabbath was to the religious life of Israel, this, and more than this, the Sunday is to the religious life of Christianity. Here, as elsewhere, the Christian obedience of the spirit "fulfils"—that is, perfects and transcends—the old obedience under the law.

It will be necessary, accordingly, first to consider briefly "the Sabbath of the Fourth

Commandment." I do not think it necessary to go behind that Commandment, by entering into the question, so earnestly and exhaustively discussed by the theologians of the past, whether anterior to the Mosaic legislation, there was a primeval Sabbath of Divine sanction, and perhaps of Divine revelation to man as man, recognized, at any rate, in the old patriarchal life of those who worshipped the true God.[1] That there may have been some ancient Sabbatical observance of a hallowed weekly rest, is, to my mind, far from improbable. For the week is the first period of time (after the diurnal period) which the changes of the moon would suggest to the simplest observation; we know that the observance of this weekly period, though far from universal, was actually widespread in the East from ancient times, especially in Chaldæa, the home from whence the father of the faithful came; and we certainly seem to trace some indication of such observance in the early history of the Old Testament. That in connection with this observance each weekly period of life may have been marked by festal institution of rest is again highly probable;[2] and in the patriarchal life, from Abra-

[1] There is an interesting notice of this controversy, and the arguments used on both sides, in Hessey's *Bampton Lectures* of 1860 (Lect. IV.).

[2] The familiar connection of the "new moons" and "Sabbaths" (see, for example, 2 Kings iv. 23; Is. i. 14; Col. ii. 6) is certainly suggestive.

ham downwards, it may well have received some Divine sanction from the God whom he and his worshipped. It would, indeed, be quite in accordance with the analogy of the whole of the ancient revelation of God, that such sanction, simple and free in the days of the older simplicity, should have been fixed, defined, and, so far as was needful, enforced, by the law-giving of Sinai.[1] Beyond this we can, I think, hardly go. True it is that in the second chapter of Genesis the hallowing of the seventh day, in that connection with the Divine rest from the work of Creation which is set forth in the inspired comment on the Fourth Commandment, is recorded by anticipation. But it is manifestly unsafe to infer from this, in the confessed absence of any distinct historical evidence, that its consecration was revealed to man from the beginning, or even to the fathers of the old Hebrew race, and made an element of religious duty.

But, as I have already said, the discussion of this subject, interesting as it is, though, as it appears to me, incapable of any definite conclusion, is unnecessary for our present purpose. It is all-sufficient for us, that the formal institution of a

[1] The Report of a Committee of the Lambeth Conference of 1887, adopted by the Conference, goes so far as to assert that "the principle of the religious observation of one day in seven is of Divine and primeval obligation, and was afterwards embodied in the Fourth Commandment."

Sabbath rest on the seventh day, first recorded as ordained for Israel alone at the giving of the manna,[1] is set forth to us in the Fourth Commandment; and is there set forth, moreover, on a ground which concerns all the rational creatures of God, as made in His image, and called to be, both in work and in rest, consciously followers of Him.

But what is the scope of the obligation of the Fourth Commandment?—how far is that obligation general to man as man?—how far does it extend to all time? On this all-important inquiry the first and foremost consideration is this—that the Fourth Commandment comes to us as an integral part of what we all acknowledge to be the moral law—to be written, not only on the granite tables of Sinai, but on the whole life and consciousness of humanity. It is clearly of that moral law that our Lord Himself said that He came not to destroy but to fulfil and perfect it, and that no jot or tittle of it is to pass away. It seems to me impossible to ignore or to explain away this dominant and decisive consideration. True it is of all the Commandments—perhaps (as St. Augustine says), in some sense, especially of the Fourth—that, if they are to have an universal and enduring application, they must be idealized—kept in the

[1] Exod. xvi. 23, "And Moses said, This is that which the Lord hath spoken, To-morrow is a solemn rest, and holy Sabbath unto the Lord."

elasticity of the spirit, rather than in the rigidity of the letter. But to idealize is not to explain away; it is simply to go down through that which is external to the inner kernel of essential reality.

Now it seems to me clear that we can trace at once a special application of the Sabbath-law to Israel, and a more extended application to the humanity which in Israel was to be blessed. It is of paramount importance to distinguish clearly between the two, lest we confuse what is obviously temporary with what may well be held to be permanent.

The coexistence of the two is, as perhaps you will remember, curiously illustrated in Holy Scripture. The inspired comment upon the Commandment (for such I take it to be) in the Book of Deuteronomy[1] is one which concerns Israel as a chosen nation set free from a national bondage. "Remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee forth thence with a mighty hand and a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." So far the Sabbath was one chief seal of the old covenant with Israel. "It is" (said the Lord Himself) "a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord;"[2] and the ancient institution, moreover, grew out from the seventh day of each week into the Sabbatical year of

[1] Deut. v. 15. [2] Ex. xxxi. 13–18.

each seven years, and the jubilee year the fiftieth year after the completion of seven times seven years, which are acknowledged to have passed away with that older covenant. In that aspect of its obligation the law of the Sabbath was urged upon Israel again and again by prophetic teaching —the "keeping of the Sabbaths" set forth as a national duty, the "polluting of the Sabbaths" as a national sin. It was enforced, moreover, by stern regulation and penalty even of death. In the later days of Israel, after the restoration from the captivity, it was one of the chief signs of their distinctiveness as a chosen people, which was earnestly guarded against heathenizing influences.[1] In the still later Rabbinical teaching, its obligation was exaggerated into a minuteness of regulation, always oppressive, sometimes trivial and even grotesque. But, on the other hand, in the corresponding comment of explanation in the Book of Exodus, the hallowing of the Sabbath is described as a following of the "rest" of the Creator —based, therefore, on a ground mysterious indeed to us, and expressed in language drawn, as human language must be, from human analogies, and therefore inadequate, yet obviously one which has no special reference whatever to the covenant of Israel, but, as connected with the creation of all, must have its meaning and relation to all human creatures. Freer accordingly it is—necessarily

[1] See Neh. x. 31 ; xiii. 15–22.

freer in its interpretation than the formal law of Israel—not enforced by minute regulation and severe penalty—but for that very reason a greater and a Diviner law, which cannot be limited in its moral obligation to this or that people, to this or that age. In this respect, as in so many others, the covenant with Israel was to serve for the enlightenment and blessing of all families of the earth; and the literal Israel was to be the type of the spiritual Israel, which was to include all peoples, nations, and languages, in a covenant not to pass away till this whole dispensation of time should be lost in eternity.

(B) But in order to understand rightly this wider moral obligation, it is important to notice, more clearly perhaps than we are apt to notice, what the whole law of the Fourth Commandment really is. It may be at first sight startling to find what seems a ceremonial law included in the moral law of the Decalogue, on a level with those Commandments which are clearly of universal undying obligation, and on which the moral life of humanity rests. But this strangeness is lessened, if not removed, when we recognize the whole scope of the Fourth Commandment, and see that, like the others, it covers the whole of human life. Its law is not merely a law of periodic rest; it is a law of the harmony of work and rest, by which the growth of humanity must be quickened and shaped.

"Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy

work"—the work, that is, which God has given thee to do—"but on the seventh day thou shalt not work," nor make others work for thee, not even thy slaves, not even thy cattle, as God's lower creatures ministering to thee. The two commands must be taken together. If work needs rest, true rest, on the other hand, can be only for those who work. The command to work—to put forth, that is, conscious energy of will and purpose—implies the privilege and duty of humanity in its mysterious freedom to be not a mere instrument, but a worker, a "fellow-worker with God." Its fulfilment is the glory of that humanity in its strength and likeness to Him. But with it comes the command to temper work by rest—not merely the involuntary daily rest of sleep, which the recurrence of night brings with it, but a conscious and thoughtful rest with all the faculties awake—a rest of spiritual, as well as bodily, repose. Such repose is indeed a refreshment to the weakness of our humanity, and, as such, needs to be guarded in each man against himself or against the oppression of his fellow-men. But it is more than this. As the very sanction of the Commandment implies, it corresponds also to something in the Divine Nature of the Creator Himself, as contemplating that which He has made, resting in it, and rejoicing in it, as "very good." From this very fact it is clear that this Divine law must in some way concern humanity as such. In its generality it is (to use Bishop

Butler's famous distinction) a "moral law"—a law, that is, the reason of which we can see; although, in the particular enactment of one day of rest in seven, it is what he calls a "positive law," the reason of which before its proclamation we could not see, and of which the reason, given in the sanction of the Commandment itself, is, even when so given, above all our full comprehension.

But whether in this sense a moral law or a positive law, it is clearly one which in both its parts concerns humanity as a whole, and which, accordingly, may rightly take its place among those which belong to all men and to all time. How singularly in human experience it seems to have been found that, even in its demand of a seventh day, it has justified or avenged itself, according to man's obedience or disobedience, in regard to effect on the body and mind, the soul and spirit of man! In both its elements, therefore, of work and rest, we might indeed rightly say that God has "blessed and hallowed" it. Our Catechism, with the wisdom which underlies its simplicity, has rightly extended its explanation of the Commandment, to recognize in it the duty of true "service" to God, whether in work or in rest, "all the days of our life." But because the command of work is enforced on man by obvious necessity, and (I may perhaps add) supported by our natural energy and delight in action, while the command of rest has behind it a true but less obvious necessity, and is really

harder so to obey as to appreciate its true blessing —therefore, I suppose, it is that the peculiar emphasis is laid upon God's blessing rest for man's good, and His hallowing it as setting men free for His service.

It is this rest of conscious repose, giving priceless time for contemplation, and so for the knowledge of self and the knowledge of God, which the Sabbath ordinance was intended to hallow. It was to be thus hallowed in the first instance for Israel, as being a chosen people of God, and as needing to be gradually educated in the fear and love of Him, and for His service towards all families of the earth. It belonged to the strict era of the Law. It was necessary, accordingly, that, like other great moral principles of human life, it should be regulated and enforced by law; and this necessity, as in other cases, was unhappily perverted so as to lead to an idolatry of the law itself, as though it were the primary object of reverence, instead of being only a secondary guard of a higher reality. How oppressively that legalism had grown upon the Jews of our Lord's own time we know well, from contemporary history as well as from the Gospel record, till it became a by-word before the wondering heathen.

It should, indeed, be remembered that this rigid enforcement of Sabbatical law had its beneficent aspect, in which it was the guard of the weak from oppressive bondage. It was the protection of the

slave from the pressure of unceasing labour; it gave relief even to the lower creatures, "the cattle," given to man for his service; it extended its benefit to the "stranger," who, though "within the gates" of Israel, was too often regarded as beyond the pale of Israelitish sympathy. In that aspect, like much of the Sabbatarian legislation of later times, it was practically a law of mercy —softening under a Divine sanction the social rigour of ancient days, and recognizing in some degree a brotherhood of humanity in Him. But yet, upon the whole, the spirit of hard and narrow legalism must have been one of those things, of which St. Peter said that "neither our fathers nor we were able to bear them," and we can see that the minute and arbitrary distinctions, by which it was alternately enforced and evaded, must have frittered away the whole sense of broad moral obligation.

Therefore it was that our Lord had to recall the obedience of His countrymen from the letter to the spirit of this Commandment, as of those others with which He dealt in the Sermon on the Mount. "The Sabbath," He said, "was made for man;" and we may not unfairly take His words in their widest sense as recognizing in the Divine ordinance an universal scope of application. It had for its essential purpose the release of men from an exhausting and intolerable burden—from the unceasing work which would become the "labour" of

weariness and drudgery—and the setting them free for a higher service and an imitation of God Himself. Therefore, in His well-known teaching as the true Son of Man,[1] He touched first on the works of absolute necessity for the sustenance of life, in ourselves and in those who depend upon us, as involving no breach of the Sabbath rest; He spoke next of works of charity, kindness, love to man, as not only lawful, but even a means of fulfilling the very idea of the law itself, because they are in themselves a delight and refreshment to every soul which bears any likeness to the God who is love; He placed higher still the works of piety, such as those of the priests in the Temple, which ministered to the worship of God, and so to the realization of the loving communion of man with the supreme love shown by Him to all His creatures. In respect of all these He declared that "the Son of Man" was not slave, but "Lord of the Sabbath"—that lordship belonging absolutely to His own perfect humanity, but belonging also in true though imperfect measure to all, in proportion as they reflected that human perfection—a lordship designed not to interrupt the service to God and man, but to make it a "service which is perfect freedom." But this was not the whole of His teaching on this great subject. It is characteristic of the deeper and more spiritual tone

[1] See Matt. xii. 1–13; Mark ii. 23—iii. 5; Luke vi. 1–10; xiii. 11–17.

of St. John's Gospel, that in it[1] we find not this simpler teaching, fit to come home to the simplicity of Galilee, but the deeper teaching, which He was pleased to give to the learning and thought of Jerusalem; and in this teaching He speaks not as Son of Man but as Son of God. To the murmur—possibly of malignant cavil, possibly of honest superstition—over the miracle at Siloam wrought on the Sabbath day, He answered with profound significance, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." In those words, "My Father worketh hitherto," He gave them to understand that the rest of God, of which the Fourth Commandment spoke, was not to be understood in a perverse literality, as though it could break the unceasing flow of His beneficial providence over all His works. In the bold addition, "and I work," He put forth, as they rightly saw, a claim to the like Divine power and freedom of Divine action, "making Himself equal with God." In that profound teaching He revealed plainly what the commands and revelations of the old Law only shadowed forth imperfectly—the true Nature of God Himself, and of the life of heaven, even for those who surround His throne, and whose work and rest coexist unbroken; for He, the God who keepeth Israel, neither slumbers nor sleeps, and the service to Him rests not day nor night. We see from this that even His spiritual teaching upon the Sabbath

[1] John v. 9–17.

as Son of Man belongs properly to this imperfect world, and prepares for the perfect revelation and the perfect life of the great Hereafter, where there "remaineth a Sabbath-keeping for the people of God."

Nor must it be forgotten that this twofold teaching, although addressed primarily to the Jews, was not to be confined to them. It was a part of His proclamation of a "Kingdom of Heaven," which was to embrace all races and to last through all time. It will be seen, accordingly, that the arguments on which He based it had no special reference to Israel; they had their wider application to all humanity, in itself and in its communion with God. The lessons which it teaches are therefore living and enduring lessons to ourselves; they apply not merely to the old Sabbath Law, but to all developments of the principle of a hallowed rest; their guidance, indeed, is all the more necessary to us, in proportion as the observance of that rest is a matter not of formal law, but free obedience of the spirit.

(C) But we observe—and the observation brings out, as will be seen hereafter, the characteristic difference between the ordinance of the Sabbath and the free growth of observance of the Lord's Day in the Christian Church—that in the Fourth Commandment, even as thus spiritually interpreted, the primary stress is laid on the rest of the seventh day, and on the Divine "blessing" of the day to be

a day of peace and freedom and joy. It is true that we read the significant words "the Lord hallowed it"—consecrated it, that is, to Himself as a seal of His covenant; and we find also (as in Lev. xxiii. 3) the command to mark it by an "holy convocation." But this aspect of the observance of the Sabbath is not brought out prominently, nor are special directions given as to any forms of religious solemnity and worship. It seems to be taken for granted that these would follow freely and naturally from a hallowed rest. As a matter of fact, accordingly, we know that in the Temple the Sabbath day came to be marked by some special solemnity of worship, by the doubling of the morning and evening sacrifice, by the offering of the new shewbread, and by the use of special Psalms, as, for instance, the glad 92nd Psalm, especially named as "The Psalm of the Sabbath day," which declares it "a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises unto Thy Name, O most Highest." The Sabbath, again, came to be naturally a special day for individual vows and offerings, and for a solemn feasting on the sacrifices so offered. Still more in the later days of Israel, after the institution of the synagogues, the Sabbath was in them the chosen day for the reading of God's Word in the Law and the Prophets, the religious instruction and exhortation of the people, and the offering of special prayer and praise. Solemnity of public worship, and doubtless of private prayer, thus

grew up freely—perhaps all the more spiritually because of that freedom. It was profoundly natural that it should be so. For (as we shall see more fully hereafter, when we consider what the Divinely-instituted rest really means) the true ultimate rest of the soul—set free from the stress and absorption of daily labour, to think of itself, to ponder the meaning and the destiny of the life given to it, and to contemplate the works of God in Nature and Humanity—must be "a rest in the Lord," in the deep sense of communion with God, which is itself an unspoken worship, and which naturally expresses itself in outward worship of word and act.

And it is notable that in the early Christian Church it was indeed clearly recognized that (as St. Paul taught the Colossians[1]) the formal law of the Sabbath rest, as of the other usages of Jewish festivals, was no longer binding upon Christians as Christians, because it was but a shadow of the substance which was to come, and had come, in Christ; but it was just this devotional use of the Sabbath (expressly distinguished from the Lord's Day) which survived for a time. There was, indeed, a marked distinction in respect of this devotional observance of the Sabbath. In the East, and in some Churches of the West, the observance was as of a festival, except on the great Sabbath of Easter Eve. Thus, for example, in what are

[1] Col. ii. 16, 17.

called "the Apostolical Constitutions," dating probably in their present form from the fifth century, but apparently embodying far older materials, Christians are exhorted "to keep the Sabbath and the Lord's Day as Feasts; for the one is the memorial of the Creation, the other of the Resurrection."[1] In the West, on the other hand, generally, though not universally, the Sabbath seems to have been observed as a fast—probably as a continuation of the fast of the Friday, and as a vigil of preparation for the Lord's Day. But yet some devotional observance remained, while the obligation of strict Sabbatical rest was ignored, or formally repudiated as Judaic. Only by degrees did it die out—the lesser light of the old Sabbath sacredness being eclipsed by the greater and ever-growing radiance of the Lord's Day—"the Day of the Resurrection, the Royal Festival, the highest of all days." For, indeed, it was just this devotional observance of the Sabbath which harmonized most truly with the freer spirit of Christian festival.

Nor is it less notable (as we shall see more fully in the next lecture) that, while the formal Sabbath law was acknowledged to be of the past, and even this devotional observance of the Sabbath gradually died out, the idea embodied in them of a hallowed rest as not merely a concession to human weakness, but a Divine institution for the

[1] Apost. Const. II. 59. 1; VII. 23. 2.

blessing and spiritual education of humanity, remained and even grew stronger in the Christian Church. So living on, it was but natural that it should gradually associate itself with the keeping of the great Christian festival of the Lord's Day. There remained, indeed, always the characteristic difference already noted, that, while to Israel the prominent idea was of rest, from which worship was a natural development, to the Christian, on the other hand, it was the primary devotion of special worship, that was gradually found to necessitate the freedom from the world which comes from rest. But still the idea of the permanent and universal value of the weekly rest remained; it was indeed a natural inheritance from the older covenant. For it was felt that this covenant was not superseded, but enlarged and spiritualized in Christ, and that its ordinances were types of the eternal principles of Christian life. In later times, indeed, it was to formalize itself in what is properly called Sabbatarianism, and base that Sabbatarianism on grounds historically and theologically unsound. But in its natural growth it was of priceless benefit, as guarding the spiritual sacredness of the Lord's Day. The famous command to rest on that day, as far as possible, by Constantine in the fourth century was but the formal sanction by temporal authority of this natural tendency in Christianity itself.

(D) Then, again, in regard to the whole law of

the Fourth Commandment two things should be observed:

First, that even for Israel its obligation enlarged itself, as by a natural expansion, Thus it extended the rest of the seventh day to the periodical observance of the great festivals and the "holy convocations" which consecrated them to solemn worship.[1] For these, like the Sabbath itself, were the tokens and sanctions of God's covenant with His people—a covenant which, with freedom and enlargement of application, was recognized by the prophets as destined to embrace all peoples, nations, and languages. The Commandment, therefore, carried with it the whole principle, directly of special rest, indirectly of special religious observance, as one practically essential to the spiritual life of humanity.

Next, that the Sabbath ordinance was designed not to supersede, but to guard and hallow, the devotion of the whole life to God—the rest in Him, underlying even the activity of daily work, and expressing itself in daily worship. "Seven times in a day," says the Psalmist, "will I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments." The devout Israelite,

[1] See, for example, Lev. xxiii., where the command of the "rest" and "holy convocation" is laid down; in v. 3 for the Sabbath; in vv. 7, 8 for the first and seventh day of the Passover; in v. 21 for the Feast of Weeks; in v. 24 for the Feast of Trumpets; in v. 27 for the Great Day of Atonement; in v. 34 for the Feast of Tabernacles.

like the early Jewish Christian, was "daily in the Temple," "praying without at the time of the Incense;" he had, no doubt, every day his times at home of the quiet rest of meditation. For these intervals of conscious worship, rescued (so to speak) from the hard pressure of life's work, were to him but symbols of that right attitude of the whole soul resting on God, which St. Paul called the "prayer without ceasing" and the "perpetual giving of thanks." There were, indeed, great mystic teachers then, like Clement of Alexandria afterwards in the Christian Church, who held up this high ideal, as independent of all periodic recurrences of special devotion in one who had the true and perfect knowledge of God. But for the ordinary life of men, who could doubt how greatly even the imperfect approach to that high ideal was quickened by the recurrence of the day, when the world could be shut out, and the absorption of its business laid aside, that the soul might be consciously face to face with God? Who can fail to see now how deeply the observance of the Sabbath through all the centuries of the dispersion has stamped a religious impress upon that Jewish life, which is, after all, unique in the history of the world?

Thus it was that the Divine law here discharged its true function of serving as a guard of the spirit —not merely in its coercive, but in its didactic power. It bade men, as has often been noticed, to

"remember" the Sabbath day, and Him who had blessed and hallowed it; lest the spiritual life should be overborne and forgotten in the pressure and the absorption of the life of the world. Surely the need of such calling to remembrance was not confined to the ancient Israel; surely it may be said to increase, as that worldly life grows fuller and more restless in these later days.

The conclusion, accordingly, to which this brief survey of the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment must lead us is certainly this—that, while the formal Sabbath law of the old dispensation, as imposed and enforced on Israel, has passed away, the idea which it embodies is one of true moral sacredness, and therefore of permanent and universal application for the blessing and spiritual education of humanity. In the tone and method of its perpetuation in the Church of Christ, there has been, as we shall see, great and inevitable change—a change to a larger freedom, a change to a higher and wider spirituality. But the idea itself cannot die. What that idea—the idea of "the Divine institution of rest"—really implies, we shall consider more fully hereafter, and endeavour to see how, under our actual conditions of life, it may be best carried out in practice. But meanwhile we may safely conclude that we do well to teach the Fourth Commandment to our children, and to read it in our Churches, Sunday after Sunday, like the other undying Commandments of the

moral law; and that, moreover, we do well to strive rightly to carry out its idea of hallowed rest in that relation to our Lord's Day, which has grown up in the Church of Christ. There is a true sense in which such "Sabbatarianism" in principle is no reproach. Even where it has practically exaggerated itself in formality and strictness, I cannot but hold with our great divine, Richard Hooker, that "I had rather be superstitious than profane." But why should we be either? It is our wisdom to keep to the spirit rather than the letter; for the letter changes but the spirit lives for ever. It is our Christian privilege to make all Divine law a "law of liberty." Only it must be ours to see that liberty shall not degenerate into vague laxity; and that time-honoured law and custom shall not be rashly set aside, but used (as St. Paul teaches), "lawfully," in their true function as the guards and guides of spiritual freedom. Still we may well take up in this connection those words of the Psalmist, which in their sweet music are so familiar to us all, as a Divine strain pervading our whole life, "O rest—rest in the Lord," "and He shall give thee" that peace which even a heathen poet declared to be "the heart's desire" of all humanity.

LECTURE II

THE GROWTH OF THE LORD'S DAY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(A) The observance of the Lord's Day originally a spontaneous growth of commemorative devotion in the Christian Church—Its absolute freedom marked in St. Paul's teaching to the Romans—Its natural development of ordinances of worship—Its fundamental distinction from the Jewish Sabbath, both in Jewish and in Gentile Christianity—The observance of rest only subsidiary to the higher purpose of worship—(B) A new epoch introduced by Constantine's Edict of Sunday Rest (A.D. 321), afterwards enlarged and developed by subsequent Edicts, and by corresponding Canons of Church Councils into an "Ecclesiastical Sabbatarianism"—The inordinate mediæval development of Festivals tending to laxity of Sunday observance in practice—(C) The great change of the Reformation, concentrating Festival observance on the Lord's Day, still as an Ecclesiastical Institution—The rise of Sabbatarianism: on the Continent virtually repudiated, in Scotch Presbyterianism rigidly accepted and enforced, in England earnestly taken up by the Puritan party, and although modified in idea and practice by High Church Anglicanism, yet in great measure adopted in "the English Sunday" till recent times—(D) The present change of opinion and practice necessitating careful study of the great principles of the subject.

IN the first lecture we considered the Sabbath law of the Fourth Commandment—both in that

narrower and more rigid relation to Israel, as a chief seal of the old covenant, which with that covenant has passed away; and also in that wider and freer relation to man as man, indicated by its inclusion in the commandments of the moral law, and by its express sanction, as an imitation by God's creatures of the rest of the Creator. We noted that in it the whole stress is laid on the law of rest, as tempering and harmonizing with the law of work; and yet that the hallowing of that rest by religious devotion and worship, without being formally and expressly enjoined, grew up naturally out of the conception of the true rest as a "rest in God," and expressed itself in special worship of the Temple and the Synagogue. We studied our Lord's spiritual teaching on the Sabbath (as against hard and minute Jewish legalism), given by Him both as Son of Man and as Son of God—a teaching clearly applicable not to the Jews only, but to humanity at large. We found that in the Christian Church, while the formal Sabbath law of rest was regarded as applying only to the past, some devotional usage of the Sabbath, as such, remained for a time; and that, when this passed away, the idea of periodical hallowed rest, as of permanent obligation and value, still established itself in the Church, and gathered inevitably round the true Christian festival of the Lord's Day; but that it was observed freely in the spirit rather than the letter, and always viewed as

merely a secondary means to the primary ordinance of worship. The conclusion to which all these considerations led was this—that the idea expressed in the Fourth Commandment (as distinct from the formal Sabbath law) applies to man as man, and has therefore rightly developed itself, as of moral obligation, in the Church of Christ. The law and order of that development we have now to trace.[1]

(A) I have spoken of "the growth of the Lord's Day observance in the Christian Church" advisedly; because that observance was not by any ordinance of authority—such as at one time men were inclined to suppose to have proceeded from the Apostles themselves, transferring to it a Sabbatical obligation. It was evidently a free growth of religious enthusiasm—a joyful and thankful commemoration of the day, doubly hallowed, as the day of our Lord's triumphant resurrection, "declaring Him" (as St. Paul has it) to "be the Son of God with power,"[2] and as the day of the Pentecostal gift, which He shed upon the little band at Jerusalem to be the seed of the new life of His universal Church. As such it became naturally a day of special religious devotion—both in the rising of each individual soul silently to the new life in Him, as He Himself rose alone in the silence

[1] For details on this subject, I may refer to my article on "The Lord's Day" in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, dealing with the history up to the ninth century.

[2] Rom. i. 4.

of the first Easter morning, and of that collective worship of the Church, which was the commemoration—may we not say the partial repetition?—of the outpouring of the Spirit on the whole body of the Church. To that twofold consecration the early Christian writers were accustomed to prefix (so to speak), as typical, the hallowing of the day—"the first day of the week"—by the creation of light for man, and by the gift of the manna, as the bread from heaven to Israel; delighting to see in these the types of a new Creation in Him, who is the true Light of the World and the true Bread of Life. But it was this twofold consecration which made the holiness and the spiritual joy of the Lord's Day. When St. John in the Book of the Revelation, using that title for the first time,[1] said of himself, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day," he expressed what was for all Christians the ideal of the great Christian festival from the beginning. There was no appeal to Divine law—the law of the Fourth Commandment, or any other. For (to use St. Paul's words) there was no need of law to those who in the Spirit had "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

The absolute freedom of this religious development is strikingly illustrated to us by St. Paul's famous teaching to the Romans—to a Church on

[1] Rev. i. 10. I am of course aware that other meanings have been assigned to τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ here; but I cannot doubt that the traditional interpretation is the true one.

which (as his whole Epistle shows) he was anxious to impress the lesson of the free salvation in Christ, and of the life of the Spirit, as setting men free from the life under law. The object of that teaching is to assert Christian freedom against censorious judgment and "doubtful disputation"; as in relation to distinctions of food, so in regard to religious observance of special days. "One man" (he says)[1] "esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully persuaded in his own mind." In the first enthusiasm of Christianity, when the whole regenerate life was felt to be consecrated to God—"continuing always in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread and the prayers"[2]—he held men to be free to use, or to dispense with, the special observance of any one holy day. It is indeed probable from the whole tenour of the Epistle that in this passage the immediate reference is to Judaic observances in the Church. But the teaching itself is absolutely general. There is no exception made in favour of the Lord's Day; although we have every reason to believe that, as the original Christian festival, it was even then esteemed above all other days in general Christian practice. It is certainly evident that its observance had not yet assumed the high universal sanctity, which ere long it was to attain; and this

[1] Rom. xiv. 5, 6.
[2] Acts ii. 42.

is curiously illustrated in the half-perplexed, half-apologetic comments on this passage by the Fathers of the early centuries, who wrote when that sanctity was so firmly established, that they found it difficult to think of it as capable of question. But it is also certain historically, that, after the Apostolic age, as the Church spread over the world, and its very diffusion and continuance tended to diminish the intensity of the early enthusiasm of faith, there grew up inevitably, in this matter as in others, a development of fuller organization of teaching, of ritual, of sacred custom. Mystic writers, like St. Clement of Alexandria in the second century, contended that in the highest spiritual sense the Christian "makes the day a Lord's Day, whenever he casts off the carnal and assumes the true spiritual mind."[1] But this absolute freedom is claimed only for the "true gnostic," who has grown to maturity in the knowledge of God, not for the great mass of professing Christians. For them the freedom which St. Paul had asserted was not indeed taken away, but it was guarded by the spiritual usefulness of special religious celebrations, just as what he calls "the prayer without ceasing"—the unspoken worship of the whole life of faith—is not hindered but helped by seasons of expressed devotion. It would be a spiritual anachronism to apply to later times and later necessities the assertion of the unchecked

[1] *Strom.* vii. 12.

freedom, neither heeding nor receiving regulation, of the old Apostolic days.

It will be seen accordingly that, as might have been expected, the sacredness, which gathered more and more round the Lord's Day—"the first day of the week"—was from the very earliest days expressed in the solemn public worship of the Church, centering in the celebration of the Holy Communion, as the first and the essential Christian service.

The *Didache*—"the teaching of the Twelve Apostles," which is all but universally held to represent the Jewish Christianity of the close of the first century—exhorts all "to come together on the Lord's Day to break bread and to give thanks, confessing your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure."[1]

Even from without we hear about the same time in Pliny's famous letter to Trajan of the regular gathering for the worship of Christ on a fixed sacred day; and Justin Martyr, in the first account of the Service of Holy Communion that we have, fixes it, as a matter of course, on the Lord's Day, which, speaking to the heathen, he calls by its common name of Sunday.[2] From the earliest times Christian writers delighted more and more to expatiate on the glory, the blessedness, the Divine associations of the Lord's Day, and to apply to it, just as we might do, the words of the 118th Psalm,

[1] C. xiv. [2] *Apol.* I. Sect. 67.

"This is the day, which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." The growth of such Lord's Day celebration was irresistible, just because it was thus free and natural; but, yet, as time went on, it tended inevitably to regulate itself and guard itself by ordinance.

It is, no doubt, more than likely that the time-honoured observance of a sacred day in every week under the older covenant may have suggested a weekly celebration of the new Christian festival. But it must be carefully noted that the Lord's Day was never for a moment identified with the Sabbath, or its observance based on the authority of the ancient Sabbath law. On the contrary, it was not only distinguished from it, but contrasted with it, both in itself and in the spirit of its observance. The principle laid down by St. Paul that the Sabbath days, with other Jewish institutions, usages, and festivals, had passed away, because they were merely foreshadowings of the substance, the Divine reality in Christ, became the very motto of the early Christianity. St. Ignatius, for example, the disciple of St. John, at the close of the first century, describes the life of the Christian as "no longer keeping the Sabbath, but living according to the spirit of the Lord's Day"—the one being the type of the old covenant under law, the other of the new covenant of the spirit.[1]

[1] μηκέτι σαββατιζοντες ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν Κυριακὴν (ζωὴν) ζῶντες, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν ἀνέτειλεν. (*Ep. ad Magn.* ix.)

The development of this fundamental distinction was different in the Jewish and Gentile Christianity. In the former, no doubt, in the first instance, the observance of the old Sabbath, as of the worship in the Temple, remained, while the celebration of the Lord's Day, with "the breaking of the Bread at home" grew up in constantly-increasing sacredness. And long after the evident passing away of the old covenant in the destruction of the Holy City and of the Temple, we find (as we have already seen) some devotional observance of the Sabbath lingering for centuries in the Church, side by side with that of the Lord's Day—in the East as a festival, except on the great Sabbath of Easter Eve; in the West generally as a fast, either in anti-Judaic feeling and protest against the Sabbath revelry of Judaism, or simply as a vigil of the great Christian festival of the Lord's Day.[1] This co-existence of distinct observance of the Sabbath and the Lord's Day, in which the lesser sacredness of the former gradually faded away before the higher light of the other, made any confusion between the two impossible.

In purely Gentile Christianity it was, of course, otherwise. There the obligation of all Jewish observance, as of the circumcision, which marked membership of the Jewish covenant, was ignored or repudiated from the day, when the Judaizing move-

[1] See the article "Sabbath" in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, Section II. (vol. ii. pp. 1823–1826).

ment in the Church was defeated by St. Paul. The celebration of the Lord's Day stood alone; or, as we have seen, made the observance of the Sabbath a mere preparation for the higher festival. But, curiously enough, there was under these circumstances some tendency, though as yet quite rudimentary, to recognize in the Lord's Day the one great weekly festival not only of devotion but of rest, to invest it with something of a Sabbatical character, and so virtually to anticipate, although vaguely and indefinitely, the idea of its being, what it was long afterwards expressly called, a "Christian Sabbath."[1]

Still under both these developments it is to be noted that the idea of hallowed rest, so strongly emphasized in the Fourth Commandment, was not, as yet, prominent in Christian teaching. The observance, indeed, of such rest would have been all but impossible, while Christianity was unrecognized and constantly proscribed in the world. But, besides this, the whole spirit of the Lord's Day celebration was positive rather than negative—the spirit of free and joyful worship in the new life of resurrection with Christ, and in the quickening and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost. In proportion as such worship, spoken or unspoken, withdrew

[1] Thus Clement of Alexandria speaks of the rest of the seventh day as simply an abstinence from evil, preparing for the day which is our true rest and the birthday of light (*Strom.* vi. 16).

men for a time from the world and from its occupations and interests, it would indirectly necessitate something of the old hallowed rest ordained in the Fourth Commandment. This might gradually introduce some sense of the moral obligation of such rest, and some consideration of its necessity for soul and body, and suggest that the Commandment might be naturally taken to sanction it for all men and all times, in virtue of that universal necessity. But, as yet, this was an influence purely secondary and subordinate. The fundamental conception was simply that of worship, with no strictness of Sabbatarian rest. St. Jerome, for instance, tells us, how in his early days he himself delighted to visit the ancient catacombs, as what we should call a Sunday amusement and relaxation, and how on the Lord's Day the members of Christian sisterhoods returned from worship to engage in the charitable work of making garments for the poor.[1]

(B) It was undoubtedly the famous Edict of Constantine (in A.D. 321)—following on his Edict of Milan (in A.D. 313), which was the first Imperial toleration, and more than toleration, of Christianity —which marked an epoch in relation to the Lord's Day.[2] In accordance with his policy of cautious

[1] See the quotations in Hessey's *Bampton Lectures*, Lect. III. (p. 74).

[2] The edict is very simple: "Omnes judices urbanæque plebes, et cunctarum artium officia, venerabili die solis quiescant. Ruri tamen positi agrorum culturæ liberè licenterque

advance, it made no express mention of Christians or of Christianity. The day is spoken of not (as in subsequent edicts) as the Lord's Day, but by its heathen title as "the Venerable Day of the Sun;" and it has been noted that in his earlier days Constantine had professed especial reverence for the Sun-god. The Edict itself simply says, "let the magistrates and the people residing in cities rest, and let the workshops be closed," while in the country, on the ground of the necessity of not losing "the bounty of heaven," "all engaged in the work of cultivation may freely and lawfully carry out their service." It alleges no religious ground; it suggests no religious observance. But it was the beginning, nevertheless, of a new era. As such, it was hailed by Christians with joy and hope; and the Emperor's courtly advisers compared him with Moses as a new religious legislator. Constantine himself (so Eusebius expressly tells us [1]) went on subsequently to enjoin religious worship on the day for his Christian soldiers, and to desire their heathen comrades to lay aside their arms, and use a prayer composed by himself to the Supreme Lord of all. And from his time onwards the obligation of a hallowed rest on the Sunday was enforced by edict after edict; the Law Courts

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inserviant . . . . ne occasione momenti pereat commoditas cælesti provisione concessa."

[1] *De vita Constantini*, iv. 18, 19, 20.

were closed; the public games forbidden; the day, now in some edicts actually called "the Lord's Day," was to displace even the celebration of the Emperor's birthday. Corresponding, moreover, to these from the other side, we find regulations of increasing strictness from the Councils of the Church. The great Nicene Council, indeed, simply takes the preëminent position of the Lord's Day for granted, by ordering that on it men should stand to pray, as having risen with the Lord. But lesser Councils pass law after law enforcing attendance on the Lord's Day at public worship; and one Council at Laodicea (in A.D. 360) lays it down expressly "that Christians are not to Judaize and rest on the Sabbath, but work on that day, but, paying higher honour to the Lord's Day, to rest on it, if they can, as Christians"[1]—to rest (that is) no doubt with Christian freedom and not with Jewish rigour. This utterance is, it will be seen, profoundly significant. It repudiates utterly the old Jewish Sabbath; it distinguishes the rest of the Christian from the rest under the old Jewish law; it makes no reference to the Fourth Commandment, as applicable to this Christian observance. But it certainly implies that conception of a quasi-Sabbatical rest on the Lord's Day, which was afterwards developed so freely in Church practice.

It is indeed to be noted that the great Christian

[1] οὐ δεῖ χριστιανοὺς Ιουδαίζειν καὶ ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ σχολάζειν . . . τὴν δὲ Κυριακὴν προτιμῶντες, εἴγε δύναιντο, σχολάζειν ὡς χριστιανοί.

writers of the fourth and fifth centuries—St. Athanasius, for example, and St. Chrysostom in the East, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine in the West—still repeat the old teaching.[1] They take for granted the abolition of the old Sabbath law ; they contrast with it the free religious consecration of the Lord's Day as the day of the Resurrection and the Pentecostal gift, and lay main stress on the consequent duty of special individual and collective Christian worship ; they spiritualize the Commandments of the Jewish law, and among these the Fourth Commandment.[2] But meanwhile the tendency goes on to what has been called an "Ecclesiastical Sabbatarianism"[3] in regard to the Lord's Day—in regulation and enforcement by law, temporal and spiritual, of what was originally

[1] See the article "Lord's Day" in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, Section IV. (vol. ii. pp. 1047–1050).

[2] St. Augustine, for example, interprets the rest of the Fourth Commandment as a rest from sin and an earnest of "the Sabbath-keeping which remains for the people of God." The passage in a sermon attributed to him (*De Tempore*) that "the holy Doctors of the Church determined to transfer all the glory of the Jewish Sabbath to the Lord's Day, that what the Jews celebrated in figure we might celebrate in reality," is allowed to be spurious, and thought to belong to the eighth century.

[3] See Dr. Hessey's *Bampton Lectures* VI. and VII., to which, especially from this point, I am greatly indebted. They contain a full account, with many interesting illustrations, of the history of the Lord's Day in the Western Church before and after the Reformation.

a free religious sanctification of that day—in insisting more and more on abstinence from work, even under penalty, and in making formal distinctions as to this obligation, almost reminding us of the old Pharisaic and Rabbinical formalism. Not, indeed, without protest from some Councils of the Church, and from teachers, such as Gregory the Great, who declared that "to command the Sabbath day and the Lord's Day"—the parallelism is to be noted—"to be kept from all manner of work" is the sign of Anti-Christ; denounced minuteness of vexatious regulations as inconsistent with the spiritual acceptance of Scriptural Commandments; and urged that rest from labour on the Lord's Day was to be carried out, simply in order to give scope for special fulness of worship.[1]

But, in spite of wise protest, the process of regulation and enforcement went on. Gradually, moreover, it began to be held that, the whole Jewish festal and ceremonial law being typical of Christ, the Church had instituted festivals which were to be antitypes of the festivals of the old covenant; and this line of thought led naturally to a virtual identification of the Lord's Day with the Sabbath, only perfecting it to a higher and more spiritual sacredness.

[1] "Nos quod de Sabbato scriptum est spiritualiter accipimus, spiritualiter tenemus. Verum Sabbatum ipsum Redemptorem nostrum Jesum Christum Dominum habemus." (*Epistles*, Book xi. Sect. 3.)

At last, though not till the end of the eighth century, we find the distinct assertion made by Alcuin, the counsellor of Charlemagne, "that the observance of the former Sabbath had been transferred very fitly to the Lord's Day by the custom and consent of Christian people," or, as some even ventured to say, by some formal ordinance of the Apostles themselves; and, for the first time it would seem in the twelfth century, the Lord's Day is called expressly "the Christian Sabbath," and the duty of observing it unhesitatingly based on the Fourth Commandment.

Meanwhile, however, it has been noted that the practice of the Church tended, on the other hand, to obscure the preëminence thus assigned to the Lord's Day, and the other great holy days commemorating the manifestations of the Lord Jesus Christ, by the multiplication of lesser festivals, in commemoration mainly of saints and martyrs, and in special honour of the Blessed Virgin—all carrying with them in various degrees the obligation, not only of special religious service, but of that cessation from the work of every day, which made a "holy day" synonymous with a "holiday." The result of this inordinate multiplication of festivals was necessarily to induce much laxity of observance; for strictness in such observance would have made the carrying on the work of life impracticable; and to a great degree this laxity appears to have extended itself to the observance of the Lord's

Day and the other great Christian festivals. Some speciality of worship, and even of the pomp of worship, of course, remained; the Sunday Mass was held to be of special obligation. But for the rest of the day free scope was given, not only to various forms of amusement and relaxation, but even to no inconsiderable amount of ordinary public and private work. The sacred quietness of the Lord's Day rest—so necessary for the growth of religious character—acknowledged still in theory, was in practice overborne by restlessness both of amusement and of business. The danger of this tendency was seen by earnest and thoughtful men, and by them protests were made both by example and by warning. But for the great mass of Christian society they seem to have been made in vain. The day was made largely a day of joy and gladness; but the rejoicing was too much of the lower type, in which the worldly overbears or obscures the spiritual.

(C) Then came the great reaction of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, affecting primarily the reformed bodies themselves, but telling indirectly even where the Reformation was rejected.

The first effect was to sweep away many, if not all, of the lesser festival observances—in some cases on doctrinal grounds, in others from doubtfulness of their historical basis, in others, again, from a wish to restore to their true preëminence

the Lord's Day and the great festivals; above all, perhaps, in strong desire for simplicity of Christian faith and life, and for recurring, in respect of it, to Scriptural and primitive usage.

But, in respect of the observance of the Lord's Day itself, there were two distinct results; and these not only distinct, but in some sense opposed to each other.

By the great Continental reformers generally—as by Luther and Calvin and Bucer, and in Reformed Confessions, such as the Lutheran Confession of Augsburg, the Calvinistic Helvetic Confession of Geneva—the principle was clearly laid down, that the strict ordinance of the Sabbath was of the past, belonging to the old dispensation under law, from which we are made free in Christ. Hence that the consecration of special days of religious observance and rest, however it might be spiritually expedient, was no essential part of Christian faith or duty; nay, that excessive care "to observe days and months and times and years" might be, according to Apostolic teaching, fraught with danger to Christian liberty and spirituality. The solemn observance of the Lord's Day was, indeed, acknowledged to be in itself religiously appropriate and edifying, and to have been of primitive, probably Apostolic, usage in the Church of Christ. It was not therefore lightly to be set aside; nor could it be set aside, without spiritual loss and danger of secularization of life for Christians in general. It was to be kept "by an uncon-

strained observance," "for worship's sake and for charity's sake." But it was to be regarded, not as resting on an unchangeable Divine Commandment, but on its expediency for religious edification and on ecclesiastical authority, and on that account, as being probably within the discretion of each Church to retain, to modify, perhaps even to abolish. With regard to Sunday rest from work, this also was held to be desirable on religious and other grounds, but it was within the province of the Christian Church, and even the Christian magistrate, to regulate it, both as to method and as to degree; and Sunday relaxation and amusement were acknowledged as in themselves lawful, but subject to the same regulation, with a view to edification and to the preservation of right opportunity for Christian worship.

In this, as in many other matters, there was evidently a desire to recur to primitive ideas and usage. But the conditions had changed. The inevitable effect of the Reformation, with the growth of religious individualism and the disruption of Church unity, which resulted from it, had been to weaken the ecclesiastical authority, on which the Lord's Day observance was thus practically based; and the result was to give opportunity for such laxity in its observance as created much serious alarm of earnest and soberminded people, and led men to seek for it some stronger and Diviner sanction. In Holland especially this seems to have been the

case; and there arose late in the sixteenth century a gradual assertion of what is commonly known as Sabbatarianism—an unhesitating application (that is) to the Lord's Day of the Fourth Commandment, and an excessive reliance on a quasi-Sabbatical law, in place of that free obedience of the spirit, which had been from the beginning its essential characteristic. Fierce controversy raged on the subject. The great Protestant Synod of Dort in 1618, attended by English delegates, was called upon to decide between the two parties. There it was laid down that in the Fourth Commandment there was a moral element, which remained when the formal and ceremonial Jewish element passed away; that, the Jewish Sabbath having been abolished, the moral obligation to keep the Lord's Day—as a day set apart for the service of God, and for such rest as is necessary to that service and to holy meditation upon Him—succeeded for all Christians; and that, in order rightly to fulfil that obligation, they were to abstain from work, except of charity and necessity, and "from such diversions as are contrary to true religion." Even after this authoritative and moderate declaration, the controversy continued for many years in Holland and elsewhere. But by degrees the Sabbatarian view in the Reformed bodies appears to have given way to the older view of the Lord's Day, as resting simply on ecclesiastical authority. In the Roman Communion it had never any lead-

ing influence. In practice, accordingly, Sunday observance, except in respect of attendance on Church services, was but little in evidence; the ordinary work of every day was largely continued; the Sunday became a special day of amusement, even to dissipation, and of political and social demonstrations, entailing of course much work for those who had to minister to them. There were those who on religious grounds deplored this secularization; some, indeed, who in later days looked with admiration on "the English Sunday," and would gladly have seen something of its stricter observance in their own countries. There were many more who felt the hard pressure of work, and longed for some weekly provision for repose and relaxation; and it may be remarked that this feeling has in later years so far increased as to lead to a considerable cessation of ordinary trade and business on the Sunday. But the general character of what used to be called "the Continental Sunday" remained.

On this side of the Channel, in England, and still more decidedly in Scotland, the tendency toward Sabbatarianism was far stronger. It is true that in the authoritative documents of the Church of England, in her Prayer-Book and her Articles and her Catechism, there was no formal pronouncement in this direction; and it is notable that when a proposal was made in 1662 to add to the explanation of the Fourth Commandment in the "Duty towards God," after the words "serve Him truly

all the days of my life" the words "particularly the Lord's Day," that proposal was rejected. The observance of the Lord's Day naturally stood out with greater prominence through the disuse of the great mass of lesser festivals, and those which remained fell into a secondary place. The insertion of the Commandments in the Liturgy (from 1552 onwards) might not improbably bring the Fourth Commandment and the degree of its obligation before men's minds. But the first leaders of the English Reformation seem generally, like the early reformers on the Continent, to have held the old view of its sacredness, simply as the one great Christian festival, coming down from Apostolic times and fraught with practical result of infinite spiritual blessing. About the same time, however, it is notable that the first "Homily of the place and time of Prayer" (published in 1563) goes much further in the Sabbatarian direction. After speaking of the Fourth Commandment, as given to Israel, it adds, "Albeit this Commandment of God doth not bind Christian people so straitly . . . for we keep now the first day, which is our Sunday, and make it our Sabbath, that is, our day of rest, in the honour of our Saviour Christ, who as upon that day rose from death . . . yet whatsoever is found in the Commandment appertaining to the law of Nature, as a thing most godly, most just and needful 'for the setting forth of God's glory,' it ought to be retained and kept by all good Christian people.

And therefore by this Commandment we ought to have a time, as one day in the week, wherein we ought to rest, yea, from our lawful and needful work. . . . If we will be the children of our heavenly Father, we must be careful to keep the Christian Sabbath-day, which is the Sunday, not only for that it is God's express Commandment, but also to declare ourselves to be loving children, as following the example " of the rest " of our gracious Lord and Father." It is clear, accordingly, that the popular teaching, which the Homily represents, virtually accepted a Sabbatarian conception of the observance of the Lord's Day.

This conception was taken up and enforced earnestly by the Presbyterian and Puritan party in the Church, always anxious to rest almost exclusively on ordinances literally sanctioned in Holy Scripture; and a strict Sabbatical observance of the Lord's Day was urged as of vital importance, and of the strictest possible obligation.[1] In Scotland this strong Sabbatarianism became even more systematic, both in theory and in practice.

[1] " It was preached in Oxfordshire that to do any work on the Sabbath was as great a sin as to kill or to commit adultery. It was preached in Norfolk that to make a feast or a wedding dinner on that day was as great a sin as for a father to take a knife and cut his son's throat. It was preached in Suffolk that to ring more bells than one to call the people to church was as great a sin as to do an act of murder."—(Strype's *Life of Whitgift*, quoted by Hessey, Lect. VII., pp. 207, 208.)

In the Westminster Confession of 1643, under the dominant influence of Scotch Presbyterianism, it is laid down expressly that "by a positive, moral, and perpetual Commandment, binding all men in all ages, God hath appointed one day in seven as a Sabbath to be kept holy unto Him; that from the beginning of the world to the Resurrection of Christ this day was the last day of the week; and from the Resurrection was changed to the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath." The Confession went on to prescribe great strictness of practical observance, and this strictness was accepted and carried out in Scotch Presbyterian custom with a grave and austere minuteness, recalling to our minds once more the old Pharisaic rigour of Sabbatarianism. The fact that the name "Sabbath" virtually superseded all others is significant of the complete victory of the Sabbatarian idea.

In the Puritan party, both in England and in its great offshoot in North America,[1] the same idea of

[1] In America, where they were in the ascendant, their views were rigorously enforced by law. In the law of Massachusetts, for example, it was laid down that "whosoever shall profane the Lord's Day by doing unnecessary work, unnecessary travelling, or by sports and recreation" should be fined or publicly whipped, and if it appeared that they had acted "presumptuously" should be "put to death or otherwise severely punished at the discretion of the Court." —(See Hessey, Lect. VII., p. 212 of 4th edition.)

the Lord's Day and the same strict general practice continued to prevail. They gained strength as a protest against much laxity and irregularity, traceable in the Elizabethan age (especially noted and condemned in the Homily quoted above [1]), and they were systematized in elaborate treatises, in regard both to theory and to practice. Against the historical fallacies, on which the Sabbatarian view was based, and against the narrow and gloomy intolerance of its practice, there was, of course, a strong resistance in the High Church school of Andrewes and Laud, of which the *History of the Sabbath*, by Dr. Heylyn, one of Archbishop Laud's chaplains, was the elaborate expression, and the publication of the authorized *Book of Sports* under the Stuarts was a popular symbol. But, in spite of the learning and ability with which the true historical position of the Lord's Day was asserted—in spite of the excessive reaction after the Restoration against Puritan severity and austerity — the Sabbatarian movement left its deep trace upon English thought and practice. The "English Sunday," as it began to be called, never indeed had anything like the rigidness of theory, and the stern austerity of practice, common in Presbyterian Scotland. But it was strong, both in its observance of rest on the Lord's

[1] The Homily goes so far as to say that "God is more dishonoured, and the devil better served, on the Sunday, than all the days in the week beside."

Day and in its preservation of its grave religious character. It is notable that the chief law against Sunday trading,[1] under which—freely and sometimes laxly interpreted—we are living now, was passed in the anti-Puritan period of the Restoration. "There was perhaps" (Canon Overton has said) "no period when the Sunday question was more satisfactorily dealt with than between 1660 and 1714." Greater laxity appears to have grown up in the Georgian period, although Addison (in the *Spectator*) and Dr. Johnson bore witness against it. But in the succeeding periods of our history, it may be roughly said that almost every time of religious revival was marked by greater fulness and fervour in the observance of the Lord's Day. This was especially notable in regard to the Methodist revival of the eighteenth century, and the Evangelical revival in the Church of England which followed it. To a great, even an excessive, extent religious energy of thought and worship was concentrated on the Sunday — now often popularly called "the Sabbath"; the hallowed rest which guarded it was jealously and even rigorously preserved; the right seriousness of the Lord's Day was exaggerated into a severe strictness of regulations and prohibitions, which tended

[1] I refer to the Act of Charles II., 1677. There had been previous Acts in the reign of Charles I. in 1625 and 1627, and there have been subsequent Acts regulating Sunday trading in 1781 and 1871.

to overshadow with dulness what should have been a festival of free religious devotion and joyful rest. When to that revival (avowedly to supplement rather than to supersede) the High Church movement succeeded, we note that—while the study of ancient Church history brought out the old conception of the Lord's Day and its distinction from the Sabbath—while the habit of practically confining solemnity of worship and devotion to the Lord's Day was protested against, and the observance of daily service and of festival celebration widened out the religious conception of public devotion—while rightfulness of innocent relaxation[1] was recognized as against excessive Sabbatarian rigour—still the reverent hallowing of the Lord's Day by worship and by rest remained substantially unimpaired, although with freer observance and with the predominance of the idea of worship, as the one thing primary in its obligation and its blessing.

Probably, as is not unusual, the English mind was content with the practical reality of this Lord's Day consecration, without caring to formulate logical Sabbatarian or anti-Sabbatarian theory; men accepted a virtual observance of the rest of the Fourth Commandment, as naturally gathering round our Christian Sunday, without examining the strict propriety of its application, or theorizing as to any transference of the Sab-

[1] Mr. Keble, for example, allowed and even encouraged Sunday cricket in his quiet village under due regulations.

bath rest to the Lord's Day by Apostolic authority. The extreme rigour of observance, both within and without the home, which had constantly evoked protests in our popular literature, and which cast a gloom of austerity over the whole tone of Sunday, "turning" (it has been said) "a Christian festival into a Jewish fast," gradually gave way before enlargement of idea, and change of circumstances and needs. But in public opinion and the practice of thoughtful and serious men, until comparatively recent times, it was felt by a true religious instinct, that to guard the Sunday rest and worship was a duty very close to the heart of Christian faith, and of infinite importance to the formation of Christian character. Grave infractions of this time-honoured observance of the Sunday, especially on the part of those of higher social position and education, were condemned by ordinary public opinion and by social conventions, even where they were not made impossible by strong religious conviction. Under such conditions there might, indeed, be some mere conventionality, and even unreality, in that observance; but that, on the whole, it told powerfully for moral and religious edification, few were inclined to question.

(D) Now there has evidently passed a serious change over public opinion and practice, tending to a laxity which would have been impossible, and would have seemed incredible, even twenty years

ago. Its growth has probably been gradual; but in the last few years it has become rapid and even obtrusive.

It is a complex growth, due to many causes —partly to some general unsettlement of religious opinion and practice—partly to modern impatience of restraint and some growth of the restlessness which is incapable of repose, and greedy of excitement and sensation—partly to an increasing pressure of work, especially in our great cities, and with it an increasing sense of the need of relaxation for body and soul as well as spirit—partly to the feeling that religious institutions, however time-honoured, must justify their permanence by accordance with the whole of human nature and human needs. But from whatever cause or causes it comes, it is a change which induces serious anxiety as to our religious future. It clearly forces upon us the consideration (on which I shall try to enter in my succeeding lectures) of what there is Divine, and therefore perpetual, in the institution of special rest and of special worship; how it must adapt itself to the new circumstances and new needs of the present time; in what points of detail our old Sunday usage may with advantage be modified, while yet its essential reality shall be preserved; how, in fact, "the old order is to change" and yet "God fulfil Himself" for us still. The examination of these questions is one of considerable difficulty; for they are questions incapable of a

rough-and-ready solution. But it is one which we must try to face, both for the satisfaction of our own consciences and the promotion of our own religious life, and also with a view to bearing right witness for God, before the world and in the Church of Christ

Even from this brief outline of the history of the Lord's Day observance in the Church two conclusions irresistibly suggest themselves—first, that having had its root in Church life from the very beginning, it must embody one of those fundamental principles which cannot die ; and next, that having been a free growth, rather than a formal institution, it may well take new practical developments to meet new conditions and needs. To see on what grounds these two conclusions can be firmly based, and how they can be harmonized with each other, must be the object of our further inquiry into the principles, which underlie that time-honoured Sunday observance.

LECTURE III

THE DIVINE INSTITUTION OF REST

The Divine Institution of Rest, tempering that of Work—(A) The rest of inaction, sleeping or waking, as a temporary concession to human weakness—(B) The rest of conscious repose, hallowed by the "rest of God," as a rest of contemplation, thoughtfully receptive of the Communion with Nature, with Humanity, with self, with God—(C) The secondary rest of change of occupation from work to recreation, needed especially by youthful immaturity, and to be subordinated to the true rest—(D) Such rest, necessary every day, but especially secured by Sunday, must satisfy the needs of all the elements of our nature—(E) The Sunday rest to be guarded for ourselves, both for effectiveness of work and as a spiritual education—(F) But even more for others, especially for the hard-worked servants of human society — The principles of our Lord's teaching as applied to Sunday trading—Sunday travelling—Sunday entertainment—Sunday Service—Conclusion.

THE object of these lectures (as I have already said) is not merely speculative but practical. If I have set before you the history of the Sabbath law of the Fourth Commandment, in its twofold relation to Israel in the past and to all humanity for all time—if I have endeavoured to trace the growth of the observance of the Lord's Day in the Church, in its origin free and spontaneous, and yet

gradually clothing itself in ordinance, and asserting for that ordinance a Divine authority—I have done so in order to suggest to you the great unchanging principles, which should guide us now on this all-important subject, in respect both of our own religious life and in our witness before the world and in the Church. The historical survey shows us at once the distinction and the inseparability of the ideas embodied in the Sabbath and the Lord's Day. It warns us accordingly in practice, on the one hand, against identifying the two, and, on the other, against divorcing them altogether from each other. The Sabbath law was, and is, the guard of a rest, which grows out naturally into worship; the Lord's Day in the Church is the inspiration of a worship, which necessitates and hallows rest. What is primary in the one is secondary in the other; and this distinction of order is of infinite consequence to the right understanding of each, and of their mutual relation, in idea and in fact. But, distinct as they are, rest and worship are ultimately inseparable. For the true rest is rest in the Lord, and such rest is unspoken worship. And whatever may be our theories on the subject, historical or speculative, practically we cannot for a moment doubt that our Christian Sunday is to us the home and the safeguard of both. Without its consecration to worship there is no security for its rest; without its rest there is no scope for the fulness of its worship.

I desire, therefore, in the next two lectures to dwell on these two great principles of Rest and Worship as Divine institutions for all humanity, and to dwell on them both in their distinction and in their harmony. For in that harmony is one chief secret of a thoughtful religious life.

First, then, I believe in a "Divine Institution of Rest." I hold the law of the Fourth Commandment to be, like the other nine Commandments, a moral law to us, and one which has its chief practical means of fulfilment in our observance of Sunday as our day of weekly rest. Like all the Commandments, it is to be, as our Lord has taught us, kept not by compulsion or through fear, but freely and gladly in love—in the spirit, which, even under the old covenant, reiterates in various tones in the great 119th Psalm, the cry, "Lord, what love have I to the Law." Like all the Commandments, it is to be spiritualized—extended (that is) from the rigid letter of the rule to the elastic principle which it embodies and guards. But so inspired, so spiritualized, I hold that it has its undying obligation to us; and I believe, accordingly, that it is by a right instinct that the Church of Christ—originally inclined to rest the observance of the Lord's Day simply on the free impulse of the spirit, which is above all law, even the Divine law—has gradually come to associate it practically with the obligation of the Fourth Commandment, and thus to

use the law as a guard and education of the spirit.

The Divine institution of rest—let me once more remind you that it is indissolubly united with the Divine institution of work for man as man—work being the conscious and serious exercise of his human will and capacity, which is a factor in the evolution of the Divine will and purpose, having relation at once to his own development, and to the service of his fellow-creatures. An idle life is a sin before God ; it cannot enjoy the true rest which alternates with work. Nay, there are (as our Lord has expressly taught us) some phases of exceptional work, which, far from being incompatible with rest, actually fulfil the purpose for which rest is given, and deepen, while tempering the rest itself. But the Fourth Commandment, taking the institution of work for granted, as enforced on man by the very course of God's Providence, dwells emphatically, because by moral necessity, on the institution of rest.

Now what is the rest thus enjoined and blessed ?

(A) There is a rest of mere inaction, consequent on our human weakness and weariness, which it needs no express commandment to sanction. It is an inevitable necessity of our nature ; it is suggested to man by the recurrence of "the night in which no man can work." It concerns most directly and most obviously our bodily nature ; and we remember in this connection that

the care of the body is not only a natural duty, but—some false asceticism notwithstanding—an especially Christian duty, on the ground that in the Incarnation the body was made the tabernacle of Godhead, and that for those who are one with the Incarnate Son of God, it is "the temple of the Lord." But the necessity of this passive rest applies as truly, if not as obviously, to the wearied mind of thought, the wearied heart of emotion, even the wearied soul of aspiration and resolution. The strain on all must be in due measure relaxed, or it becomes intolerable. And this necessary rest of inaction takes mainly, though not quite exclusively, the form of sleep—"the balmy sleep" which is "tired nature's best restorer," and which "God gives to His beloved" in His own everlasting arms, as One who Himself "neither slumbers nor sleeps." I do not know whether, as a rule, even sleep altogether suspends our mental consciousness; yet certainly it takes off the strain and weariness of labour; it has—so God has graciously willed it—a special sweetness of its own. Who can exaggerate the blessing of its relief to the mind and soul as well as the body, from which we wake to the freshness of a new day? Without it work would become a burdensome and ineffective drudgery; and sleeplessness itself is a positive torture, which leads on to insanity and death. Infinitely cruel is the tyranny which even indirectly denies this interval of mere passive rest, waking

or sleeping—inhuman, because it ignores the needs of humanity. Infinitely valuable, therefore, to our frail human nature is any moral safeguard against that cruel pressure of the world's business, which involves something of this tyranny.

But the waking rest of mere inaction has its value only as a temporary remedy for pure exhaustion, mental or physical. If it be continued beyond that need it becomes dulness, burdensome and depressing; if it be enforced as a punishment —as in solitary confinement, for example, without some occupation—it leads at least as surely as unceasing restlessness to insanity or imbecility; if it be allowed to degenerate into laziness or self-indulgence, it becomes a delusion and a snare.

But it is clearly indicated to us that even at the best this rest, which is thus for a time a concession to human weakness, is not properly the rest which the Fourth Commandment blesses and hallows. For the inspired comment upon the Commandment, in words at once mysterious and suggestive, hallows that rest, as a reflection of the "rest" of God Himself; as belonging, therefore, not to man's weakness, but to the Divine Image in him, which is his strength and glory; as being an appointed part of his spiritual education towards the fulness of the Divine Likeness. Nay, we cannot but remember that in the great Epistle to the Hebrews, it is spoken of as that "Sabbath-keeping which

remains for the people of God," even in the perfection which we call heaven.[1]

The "rest of God"—it is of course easy to see that here, as elsewhere, God is (as indeed He must be) spoken of in language taken from our finite human experience, and necessarily inadequate to describe His infinity. In its original use in the record of Creation, its most obvious and immediate purpose is simply to designate the close of the six periods or phases of creative development, crowned by the introduction of humanity upon the earth. Our Lord Himself warned the Jews that what they knew as the "rest of God" could not for a moment suspend the unceasing flow of His beneficence to His creation. But yet we ought not to pass these words by. There must surely be some deep meaning for us in the phrase, which it concerns us to study. Can it be better brought out than in the words of St. Augustine?[2] "God rested—not as if He was weary. No! the Creator of the ends of the world fainteth not, nor is weary (Isa. xl. 28). But He saw that what He had made was good; He contemplated His own works and rejoiced in them (Ps. civ. 31); and thus commended to us the state of contemplation as higher than that of labour, and to be attained

[1] Heb. iv. 9.

[2] Quoted by Bishop Wordsworth in his *Old Testament Commentary* (on Gen. ii. 3).

by labour."[1] The rest of the Fourth Commandment is therefore something more than the rest of physical and mental necessity—a rest of which, as in sleep, the essence is total or partial suspension of responsible consciousness. It is a rest in which all our faculties are awake, and at their best; it is characteristic accordingly not of our lower, but of our higher humanity; it is, as harmonized with the energy of work, an inherent duty of that humanity, and a means of its education and development. It is what St. Augustine describes as "contemplation"—a state (that is), as I understand it, of intelligent and thoughtful receptiveness of influences from without and from above, in which we are content to cease from work, in order to feel and to understand. It applies to our whole nature—the body of sense, the soul of passion and affection, the spirit of thought and moral resolution and aspiration after the Divine. All these in their right order of relation have need and capacity of this conscious receptiveness of rest.

(B) It has its various phases. Need I remind you what restful influence there is in the sense of communion with Nature—the feeling (which it is all but impossible to analyze or describe) of refreshment in its quietness, its beauty—perhaps especially its homelier and sweeter beauty—its marvellous and inexhaustible exuberance of life

[1] *De Gen. ad Litteram*, iv. 11.

and happiness. It is an influence which may come home to us through all the avenues of our senses—in its fragrance, its brightness, its harmonies of sound, the very freshness of its air upon the cheek. But, even when it so comes through the senses, it is in itself an influence on the spirit within us. We gaze on Nature without striving to peer into its secrets by the thoughtful study, which is work, and often the hardest of work; in our measure we contemplate it and know that it is very good; nay, behind it and below it, we feel a Supreme goodness, on which we can rest.

There is, again, a rest, perhaps even closer to our hearts, although it may in less degree touch our imagination, in the influence upon us of humanity as it should be—nay, as in its highest and sweetest phases it is—an influence which we are content consciously to receive, and only half-consciously to return. There is the refreshment of this receptiveness in the realm of mind, in the presentation to us, by personal intercourse or through the wider intercourse of books, of ideas of truth and beauty, of righteousness and a wisdom grave or humorous, which we can take in without effort and without critical responsibility or antagonism. There is the same restful influence in the realm of imagination—in receiving the impressions of beauty and sweetness, which come to us from spirits higher or brighter than our own, through the art, the music, the poetry, to which we are content to

yield ourselves, and catch from them insensibly "thoughts beyond our thought." There is a fuller refreshment still, which belongs to the moral realm of our experience—in the deep sense of mutual duty and mutual love, in which we breathe the higher atmosphere of our membership of humanity —mutual, indeed, for we cannot appreciate it unless we return it, but yet such that we feel what we receive far more than what we give. That moral rest of the soul—it has its sweetest development in our home, to which we retire from the turmoil of the world; it has its highest and most sacred development in the Christian fellowship of the Church. But it belongs, in a measure, to all forms of our communion with humanity—in which we are content to lose ourselves and suspend for a time the energy and responsibility of individuality.

And, in respect of this contemplation of humanity, be it noted, in passing, that by the wonderful power in us of self-reflection, we can extend it to our own humanity—standing, as it were, outside that self-absorption, which in work we are forced intensely to realize, and so viewing our own life as from above, in the retrospect through memory of the past, the contemplation of the present, the anticipation of the future in hope.

Infinitely needful is this self-contemplation, if we are "to apply our hearts unto wisdom"—the wisdom which seeks to know ourselves, and gain some glimpse of the purpose of our life. In it

there should be rest; and such rest there would be, if our higher humanity was unimpaired. But, as it is, it may be harder to guard its restfulness from the busy activity of desire and resolve, the disturbance of dissatisfaction with self, and the painful longing for better things—impossible, perhaps, so to keep it, except through that higher and deeper rest, of which I must lastly speak.

That supreme rest is the "rest in the Lord." It is the rest of an absolute faith in His Fatherly righteousness and love over us, in the salvation from our sin and misery and death, for which the Son of God took our humanity upon Him, in it to live for us and to die and to rise again, and in the Divine power of His Spirit in us to quicken us to the redeemed and regenerate life. It is this which underlies that rest on Nature and Humanity of which I have already spoken; for it is God who is reflected in both. But it comes home directly and vividly to the religious consciousness, in the simplest and most childlike soul, as vividly, though not as deeply, as in the higher spirit, most capable of the Divine wisdom of thought and contemplation. And for both it is the true hallowed rest—the only rest rationally possible in a world full of perplexity and danger, and under the unceasing sense of that great responsibility, which we cannot throw off, or can only throw off imperfectly, by rest on any created being. Every one knows and feels the truth of St. Augustine's famous declaration, "God hath made

the heart for Himself; it is, it must be, restless till it finds Him."

(C) This in its various phases is the true rest of repose. There is, indeed, a secondary form of rest in change of occupation—especially in the change from the serious occupation, which we know as work, to the light and careless occupation of what we call the play, the amusement, the relaxation of life, in which natural energy is still in some measure called out, but with no object except the simple delight in its exercise. It is a form of rest which is, no doubt, in various degrees needed by all, but especially by those who are still youthful in age or youthful in character, overflowing in energy, and as yet only imperfectly capable of the true rest of a quiet and thoughtful repose. For body and mind, for soul and character, it has its proper function, and in view of that function it is not wrongly called "recreation." But it may be doubted whether in our own time it is not apt to be somewhat exaggerated, as to importance and educational value, above the position which it ought to hold as purely secondary and preparatory. In fact, by such exaggeration it is too often spoilt for its right purpose, and apt to distract rather than to refresh. Certainly, in regard to the Sunday rest, it is, I think, likely to do more harm than good to ourselves, if it generates any restlessness of excitement—if by excess it becomes dissipation—still more if (by a tendency which in this age we know only too well) the light-

ness of amusement is systematized into an absorbing eagerness of occupation. Certainly there is need to beware lest it should inflict excessive work upon those who have by necessity to minister to it. So long, therefore, as it is necessary for us, let it be kept in its right place, not without a certain reserve of Sunday quietness. Out of it I cannot but think that maturity of Christian character should largely grow.

Now this Divine institution of rest is a complex thing, because it is designed for man's nature as a whole, in its lower as well as in its higher aspects—for its weakness as well as for its strength. It is the Divine will, as St. Paul's prayer for his converts implies,[1] that spirit and soul and body shall be preserved, and preserved as one, in their right relation and order. It is an evil if the fulness of that harmony be neglected, yet perhaps a greater evil if, in the attempt to secure that harmony, the wrong note be made dominant. If the former error leads to narrowness, the latter results in distraction. We need some careful thought and study, if we are to avoid both, and keep at once fulness and right proportion in God's gift of rest.

Now, of course, I need not say that the blessing and duty of rest are not to be restricted absolutely to any one sacred season. Every day we live should find room, or make room, as far as possible, for its right development—giving us time to think, time

[1] 1 Thess. v. 23.

to feel, time to love, and time to worship. Such daily rest is needed, even for the effectiveness of the daily work. It is significant that, in order that we may "do our own business," St. Paul exhorts us "to study to be quiet"[1]—implying, what is indeed most true and especially true in our own days, that quietness needs to be studied if it is to be secured. The ideal before us is that life in heaven, where work and rest, energy and contemplation, coexist and interpenetrate each other. That ideal, in spite of our earthly imperfection, we must always have in view, and towards it Christian life, in proportion to its maturity, should approach even here.

But it is of the special consecration of that institution of rest in our Christian Sunday that I have now to speak. Here one thing is certain, that without it the right proportion of rest to work in our life will not be rescued from the pressure of the world's demands and the distraction of its excitements. That sacred day of rest, even as rest, I would earnestly pray you to guard. The English Sunday in the past, as a day of quietness and rest, accepted in the spirit of religious duty and supported by law and public opinion, has been one of the most powerful agents in the formation of strength and solidity in English character. God forbid that we should lose it! The conception of what its rest should be may well be so enlarged as better to correspond

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 11.

to all the elements of our nature, and be so guided by elastic principle, rather than rigid law, as to suit various characters and various needs. The error, no doubt, of the past has been twofold. First, the recognition only of the highest form of spiritual rest in God, demanding an exclusive devotion to this from minds not yet prepared for it, especially young and uneducated minds, and branding all other forms of rest and relaxation as desecration. Next, the enforcing it with a strict and narrow severity of law and custom, which has often made the day a dull and almost intolerable burden of enforced idleness, and turned "Sabbatarianism" into a proverb of ridicule or reproach. But in the reaction of our own days the danger is rather, I think, that we should lose the right spiritual order, and allow the lower forms of mere relaxation to overbear, and perhaps crowd out, the higher and truer rest. Our age is in itself an age of much restlessness, impatient of what it calls dulness, greedy of excitement and sensation, sometimes (to use St. Paul's grave irony [1]) so overbusy in work and amusement that it does nothing worth doing, because it leaves itself no time to think. Surely it is, even for humanity's sake, a priceless blessing to such an age that the Sunday should come to us as an interval of quiet peace, and teach us to realize this Divine institution of rest.

(D) We should guard it for our own sakes,

[1] 2 Thess. iii. 11: μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους.

even that we may rightly do the week-day work. One of the greatest leaders of the generation just past—a man remarkable above all others for an exuberant and versatile energy—left us on this matter a legacy of invaluable witness. Mr. Gladstone in his old age felt deeply, and declared emphatically, that to the steadfast resolution to hallow the Sunday rest he owed, under God, the preservation of his extraordinary vitality, through labours and anxieties which otherwise must have worn out even his iron constitution.[1] The experience which he so strikingly exemplified is, I believe, the experience of most of the hard workers of life. As the burden of daily work grows heavier and more distracting, it is true that we are seeking to secure more and more intervals of relaxation, and to multiply holidays of rest and amusement. The tendency, if it does not run to excess, is certainly for good, especially in a hard-working community. But it is not every one who can rightly use holiday, so as to guard it on the one hand from laboriousness, on the other from disorder and excess; and holidays misused are certainly demoralizing to those who misuse them. At the best they cannot, like the quiet Sunday rest, go down to the depths of our wearied nature; they

[1] See a remarkable quotation of his testimony on this subject in the Rev. W. B. Trevelyan's very interesting volume on *Sunday* in the *Oxford Library of Practical Theology* (pp. 277–279).

cannot give refreshment to that nature as a whole, and brace it up in all its faculties for the daily work.

(E) But it is not only for this effectiveness of life's work that true rest is needed. We have to receive, and assimilate what we receive, as well as to give out what is in us; and whatever we receive that is good we receive ultimately from God. It is ours simply to receive it as our spiritual food and refreshment, and, by receiving it thoughtfully and thankfully, to make it our own. This is a necessary condition of the education of our humanity. We may, indeed, feel for ourselves, and recognize for others, the need of some measure of wholesome and healthy relaxation and amusement on our day of rest, and see clearly enough that for very many among us the hard dulness and monotony of every-day life make this need more pressing than ever, especially for the young, and for those who are cooped up all the week in the stress and turmoil of our great cities. But still we cannot but testify that room must be found, time must be rescued, not only from pressure of work but from the self-forgetful-ness of amusement, for that deeper and more thoughtful rest. And in proportion as we grow in age, and should grow in maturity of character, and in proportion also as we have the capacity which comes from education and leisure, we should surely hope to grow out of these lower needs, and be capable of a fuller delight in the higher rest of the spirit. We should know more and more, in

fact, that the blessing of rest depends on its being really hallowed to God.

(F) But we need still more to guard this Sunday rest for the sake of others. The comment on the Fourth Commandment in Deuteronomy, dwelling on Israel's deliverance from bondage, pleads especially the cause of the slave—to say nothing of the cattle given by God to man's charge and service. Surely we ought to carry out its spirit of charitable and merciful provision both within and without the home. Within the home we may well protest against infringement, to any serious extent, of the good old-fashioned usage of sparing or lightening the work of domestic service on the Sunday, by some willing sacrifice of comfort and luxury, for the sake of giving to our servants needful rest and relaxation, and, still more, opportunity of attendance on public worship. Yet it is far more necessary, and far more important, to see that it be carried out in regard to the hard-toiling servants of human society against the pressure of public Sunday work—now rapidly increasing, in respect perhaps of Sunday trading, certainly of Sunday travelling and Sunday entertainment. Some measure of that work there must be, and probably a greater measure under our present social conditions than in quieter and simpler days gone by. But its growth—at this moment a serious and probably excessive growth—should be jealously watched; and for the principle of its right restriction

and regulation we have simply to fall back on our Lord's teaching as to the Sabbath, in its well-known sanction of the works of necessity and charity and piety—corresponding, it will be observed, to man's threefold service, to self, to his fellow-men, and to God.

Clearly as to Sunday trading the only right plea is the plea of necessity—actual or virtual necessity—applying mainly to the needs, and especially to the food traffic, of the poorer classes of our great towns. As to the old laws against regular Sunday trading, it is, I think, almost universally felt—not least by the trading classes themselves—that, on the one hand, they ought to remain, as in general an invaluable safeguard for them of rest and freedom; and that, on the other, they cannot be enforced with literal strictness, but must admit of a certain freedom, and even a certain laxity, of interpretation. What we have chiefly to desire here is so to create or strengthen a right public opinion among those who make use of this traffic, as to limit it, as far as possible, and to see that the necessity pleaded is a real and not, as it sometimes appears to be, a fancied or exaggerated necessity. Where Sunday trading goes beyond things that can claim to be necessary, it cannot, I think, be too earnestly discouraged; and, above all, where it has to do with the supply of intoxicating liquor, it can hardly be questioned that, for this and for still more weighty considerations, it ought to be, if not

absolutely forbidden, certainly rigidly restricted, more rigidly than in our present practice in England. The Sunday Closing Acts in force in other parts of the United Kingdom may, like other laws, be evaded; but the evidence of their good effect on the moral and physical welfare of the community seems to be so far established, as to encourage every effort for their extension. Certainly the traffic which they forbid is the worst and most unseemly form of Sunday trading.

Far more serious, in the enforcement on others of Sunday labour, is the immense increase in late years of the facility and practice of Sunday travelling. Now where such travelling comes under the analogy of the "work of piety," as being in various degrees necessary for the maintenance of public worship, and even for facilitating attendance at such worship—especially at services of great religious value for conversion or edification—it may claim that it subserves the highest and more sacred purpose of the Lord's Day. Even so, it should not be needlessly imposed, to gratify mere spiritual fancy and excitement. Perhaps it runs in these days to some excess. There is much of sober wisdom and charity in the old-fashioned scruple against the tendency to restlessness in ourselves, and needless labour for others, which such travelling implies. But, compared with other Sunday labour, its amount can hardly be great; and under our present religious conditions its compensating spiritual

advantage may perhaps be greater. It hardly seems to present itself as a very serious question.

It is otherwise with the great and growing practice of Sunday travelling for pleasure and relaxation, in the neighbourhood of London and our chief provincial towns, carrying with it, as it must do, a large measure of work and of Sunday trading in places of public entertainment. Clearly it is becoming a formidable danger to Sunday rest. For those who use it so lavishly, it often becomes a distraction, even a dissipation or a weariness, utterly destroying the restful quietness of the Sunday—to say nothing of its higher sacredness. But to those who have to serve it—even when attempt is made to organize it, and to prevent, as far as possible, excessive pressure on individuals—it is really becoming a hard labour, an oppressive drudgery, a flagrant breach of the Divine institution of the Lord's Day rest. "The Sunday," they bitterly complain, "is to us the hardest and the most distracting day of the week." Now in regard to this serious imposition of Sunday work, I can see that our Lord's teaching as to works of necessity and even works of charity (if by charity we understand public service for the good of others) may well apply, in relation to the needs of the great mass of our English society. I can understand that some sacrifice (as much mitigated as possible) may be required for the sake of the relaxation and change of air and

scene, necessary to health of body and mind, of the thousands who can have it only on the Sunday, and who cannot have it at home, especially in the homes, which hardly deserve the name, of so many of our people, living in the poor and densely-populated regions of our great cities, and likely, if they are forbidden it, to seek relief in baser and more dangerous excitements. The pressure of this necessity is perhaps lightened by that increase in our own time of week-day holidays and half-holidays, of which I have already spoken; but it still exists to a very considerable extent. For those, indeed, who have no plea of such necessity, it is hard to find excuse for the excessive use, or rather abuse, of mere pleasure-seeking travelling on the Sunday. But for those who have that plea, undoubtedly and, perhaps, increasingly, it is impossible to forbid it, and difficult to condemn it absolutely. All that can be done is to watch it somewhat jealously, as I think it is being watched by the classes most interested in it; to provide, if possible, against its running to dangerous excess; to provide, certainly, for its right regulation with a view to the relief of the workers, and to bring in (as we shall see in the next lecture) the Divine institution of worship, to supplement defect in the institution of rest.

And in this same connection there naturally comes before our minds the question of what may be called, in the widest sense, "Sunday Entertain-

ment"—so far as it makes provision of the means of Sunday recreation for the hard-worked masses of our people. The question is one which in each case must be judged on its merits; for clearly almost all depends on the character of that recreation, and the conditions under which it can be secured. But it would seem that there are certain leading principles which ought to determine that judgment. The recreation should be innocent and wholesome, and not such as will jar in tone with the higher associations of the Lord's Day. It should be capable of such regulation as will prevent its entailing on individuals an excessive amount of enforced work. It should be kept absolutely clear of the commercial element of money profit, and of the competitions and rivalries which it brings with it. It should be so arranged as not to interfere with the public worship, to which all other occupations of the Lord's Day must be subordinated. Only by substantial accordance with these conditions can it rightly hold its place. Such accordance, for example, may be fairly claimed for the Sunday opening of galleries and museums. To those who make use of it—not, it would appear, a large number—it offers a quiet and humanizing recreation, and the work which it imposes cannot be great, and need never be oppressive. Of the provision of music, again, in the open air or elsewhere, much the same may be fairly said; provided always that it be kept strictly

from payment, direct or indirect, which turns it into Sunday traffic, and that it be not allowed to trench on the hours of Divine service.[1] But the whole matter of this recreation needs much care and vigilance, to keep it to its right subordinate place, and guard it from restless excitement and dissipation. The regular opening, as on the Continent, of places of public entertainment (theatre and concert halls, etc.), for which money is paid, would simply ruin and desecrate our English Sunday. The proposal, now occasionally made, of a general sanction of Sunday sports after old custom seems to me an anachronism, considering the tone and conditions of such sports in our own days, the inordinate devotion to them, which appears to be growing upon us, and the danger of vehement excitement, rivalry, even gambling, which they certainly entail, and from which we should surely keep the day of rest absolutely free.

In regard to recreation in general, it is only for those who sorely need it, and can only hope for it on the Sunday, that it may be rightly and wisely encouraged and provided. For it is surely impossible, even in this aspect of the subject, to bear a too earnest and indignant witness against the growing habit of Sunday travelling, amusement, and dissipation among the wealthier and more educated

[1] These applications of the principles are put forward simply as matters of personal opinion. It is on the principles themselves that I desire to lay stress.

classes, who have not the excuse of hard week-day pressure, and can take a holiday without much difficulty when they will. By it the old quiet of Sunday is being rapidly broken up ; all its wholesome conventions are set aside without scruple ; entertainments public and private are becoming the order, or rather the disorder, of the day. For those who indulge in it, this growing Sunday dissipation is bad enough. Not only does it secularize the Sunday by an open disregard of religious duty and profession ; but it takes away a great and time-honoured safeguard against the temper of restless excitability and frivolity, which is fatal to solidity and seriousness of character. But far worse and far more unjustifiable to my mind is its reckless infliction on others—their own servants and dependents and the hard-worked servants of the public—of unnecessary Sunday toil ; an infliction cruel in itself and fatal in the demoralizing example which it sets to those who will follow where they lead. I rejoice (as I have already said) to see that plain-spoken testimony against it has of late been seriously borne, not left to us clergy, but supported by hundreds of laymen—fair representatives of those very classes—who can speak with effect, because they speak with knowledge. But that protest of public opinion needs to be far more widely and universally taken up. It is on that public opinion that we must rely ; although I would preserve (with the necessary free-

dom of administration) the wholesome restraints of law, which guard, rather than overbear, liberty. And, therefore, I would press this aspect of the subject as strongly as I can on all thoughtful men, according to the measure of their power and opportunity. I do not desire, for I should hold it presumption, to insist on any rules or even counsels of detail : these must vary with circumstances and conditions. We have suffered too much in the past from too hard-and-fast Sabbatarian rules—apt to be oppressive, apt sometimes to be absurd in their minuteness. It is simply on the great principles of the subject that we must lay stress; if they be understood and firmly grasped, they will find, in each case, the right way of expression in practice.

There is but one other consideration as to the Sunday rest, to which some brief reference may perhaps be made. It has for many of us to give place to higher service—in some measure to the service of charity, in greater measure to the true "work of piety," the directly religious service. The Divine institution of rest yields, in fact, to the yet Diviner institution of worship, on which we shall dwell hereafter. For us clergy the Lord's Day is inevitably the day of the chief energy of ministry; and those of our lay brethren—happily an increasing number—who take their part in that ministry, of teaching, of visitation, of Divine service, share with us its burden as well as its privilege. Yet even so all consideration of Sunday rest ought not

to be absolutely set aside, although it must be subordinated. For the sake of our own spiritual needs, as well as for the efficiency of our spiritual ministration, it is surely well, as far as possible, to find some intervals of thoughtful quiet, even in this hard Sunday work. It is quite possible to be too incessantly busy: and to do too many things may not be the wisest service. It may be well, again, if only it can be—and many wise counsellors have advised it—to make for ourselves another Sabbath in the week—not only the old Sabbath day of preparation for the Sunday, but a day of simple and thoughtful rest, in that large and comprehensive sense of which I have spoken. In such interruption of active work there may well be a real furtherance of its efficiency; for how often is it marred, because it wants the guidance and the deepening influence of quiet thought! But, meanwhile, it is our comfort to know that in the work itself of the Lord's Day there is an undercurrent of rest. For it simply ministers to worship, and so to communion with God: in the very lifting up of our own souls, or the souls of others, to Him there is the infinite joy of faith; and in that worship we realize God's part towards us as well as ours towards Him, and in the glad tidings of His word, and the spiritual blessing of His sacraments, there is, even for the weary, the refreshment of peace.

I have been able in the compass of a single lecture to suggest to you only a brief outline of a

great subject. But it is a subject, which for the well-being of our whole society is at this moment of some serious urgency. Therefore I pray you to fill up that outline for yourselves, in application to your own circumstances, your own character, and your degree of spiritual maturity. It may be more difficult to do this than it once was. But I hold it useless—perhaps worse than useless—to complain of the conditions of life in which God has given us our lot. There is still deep wisdom in the saying of the Preacher, "Say not what is the cause that the former days were better than these: for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this." Through the spirit of each age the Spirit of God can fulfil Himself in many ways. So on this subject it is vain to sigh for the old forms of Sunday quietness; to our age, if they could be recalled, the day might not improbably seem dull and listless. But for that very reason it is surely well to study, so far as we may, the inner principle of true rest, as a Divine institution of blessing for all humanity, and to see how we can best preserve it under our new and more complex conditions. It can be done, if we will. In the spiritual music of modern days true harmony has to be wrought out in greater subtlety, through what would have in simpler days seemed to be discords. Not merely beyond the voices of the present, but even through them, there may well be the rest of peace.

Not yet even now have we reached the highest

sacredness of the Lord's Day. This we shall find in the recognition of that which its first free observance mainly embodied—the Divine Institution of Worship. It will then be clear, I think, not only that it alone safely guards and rightly spiritualizes the institution of rest, but that, both ideally and practically, the two, though distinct, are inseparable. But meanwhile it is well to understand the priceless importance of the Sunday rest, even to those who regard only the interests of our higher humanity. It is one instance among many of the truth that devotion to the service to God is the very life and strength of the service to man. Accordingly, for the preservation and advance of Sunday observance among us, we may rightly enlist all merely human considerations—the consideration of the highest expediency for ourselves—the consideration of the truest charity towards others, especially those who most need protection from the hard pressure of life—the consideration of the importance of thoughtfulness and quietness, as an influence which moulds and strengthens our national character. But yet we may not forget, or suffer others to forget, that none of these will in themselves be sufficient to secure the priceless boon of true Sunday rest. All must be subordinated to the supreme power of the devotion to God—the spoken and unspoken worship—by which the Lord's Day is not only blessed, but hallowed. For so only we can secure the true rest of our

humanity which, as has been already said, is a "rest in the Lord."[1]

[1] There are two very interesting popular movements in France and in England for the preservation of the Sunday rest.

The movement in France, which is "for the rest and sanctification of Sunday," has been approved by the highest Ecclesiastical authorities of the Roman Catholic Church, and formally blessed by the late and the present Popes; and its notices are posted on an immense number of churches in France. Its rules lay it down that for the right observance of the Sunday:

"Il faut (1) Ne pas travailler, ni faire travailler le Dimanche; (2) Ne faire des commandes qui amèneraient le travail du Dimanche; (3) Ne pas acheter le Dimanche, et préférer, même en semaine, les magasins fermant le Dimanche; (4) Refuser les livraisons faites le Dimanche; (5) Ne pas expédier de lettres le Dimanche, sans urgente nécessité, ne pas expédier de paquets; (6) Si vous faites bâter ou réparer, stipuler qu'on ne travaillera le Dimanche; (7) Assister à la Messe, et, autant que possible, aux autres Offices de la paroisse; (8) Faciliter cette assistance à ceux qui dependent de vous."

These rules are advocated by the Secretary, under express Episcopal sanction, from various points of view—on the ground of "usefulness to health," "to liberty and honour," and "to the life of the family," as well as of obedience to "the Law of God."

In England "the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association" (now in its 47th year), supported by distinguished Patrons and Vice-Presidents, but conducted by an Executive Committee of working men, declares as to its main object and the means of effecting it—

"I.—That the object of the Association be to secure to the People their natural and Scriptural right to the rest of the Lord's Day.

"II.—That the Association seek to accomplish its object by the following means:

1. By meetings for prayer, and the study of Scripture on the subject of the Lord's Day.
2. By collecting and disseminating information and Scriptural views with regard to the observance of that day through the pulpit, the press, public meetings, and correspondence.
3. By promoting the election to Parliament of such Christian men as are understood to favour the object of the Association.
4. By petitions to Parliament on behalf of that object.
5. By supporting the efforts of individuals and Institutions engaged in furthering that object.
6. By forming Branch Associations, and by promoting united action amongst all who have the same object at heart.
7. And by securing the co-operation of the Working Classes in carrying out the object of the Association."

In it the dominant influence is distinctly religious. Its Report opens with the declaration that "the salvation of the world depends on three great Institutions—God's Word, God's House, God's Day"; and at a great National Conference held in May 1904, the leading Resolution asserted that "the defence of the Lord's Day is a National question of the first importance, on which the physical, intellectual, and religious life of the whole country depends."

It will be observed that both these movements have a strong religious impress, on which I cannot doubt that their vitality largely depends. But in both the leading idea is the preservation of the Sunday rest, to be secured both by negative prohibitions and positive observance; and both, dwelling on the benefits physical, social, and moral of that rest, evidently desire to enlist, and probably succeed in enlisting, considerable support on social and humanitarian grounds.

LECTURE IV

THE DIVINE INSTITUTION OF WORSHIP

(A) The Divine Institution of Worship the original inspiration of Lord's Day observance—(B) Worship the conscious realization of Communion with God through all the faculties of our nature, expressing itself in confession and prayer, and in thanksgiving and adoration—(C) In it the secret at once of perfect rest and of the highest spiritual activity, and the expression of the individual and collective relation of our humanity to God—(D) The Lord's Day the special consecration of both collective and individual worship, marked, above all, in its proper service of Holy Communion—(E) The public Lord's Day worship the great object of the Lord's Day rest, and one chief witness against secularization of life—The seriousness of the neglect of that worship by the masses of our working people, and by the classes of higher station and education—(E) The need of individual Lord's Day worship—(G) The dominant idea of worship the true test of suitability or unsuitability of all Sunday occupations—Concluding summary.

WE have already dwelt on the Divine institution of rest—not the rest of inaction, the mere necessity of human weakness, but the rest of thoughtful contemplation, through which we receive the influences of refreshment and spiritual education from Nature, from Humanity, from God Himself. By it, as well as by the work which it tempers, we so

follow Him as to grow into His likeness, and anticipate, even here, the heavenly "Sabbath-keeping of the people of God." Of that Divine institution, although it pervades in measure our whole life, the Lord's Day—as to us, practically, though not ideally, a "Christian Sabbath"—is our chief safeguard. Deeply it concerns us to keep it as such, but to keep it in the freedom of the spirit—recognizing the need of such rest for all the elements of our complex nature, in the right order of regard to body, soul, and spirit—allowing for the phases of exceptional work, which are necessary for the welfare of human society—but guarding it for our own sake and for the sake of others, as an institution of blessing, needful for all humanity, and accordingly hallowed for it by God.

(A) To-day we pass to that yet Diviner institution, distinct though inseparable from it—the institution of worship; which has been, as I have reminded you, the original and leading idea from the beginning of the free observance of the Lord's Day in the Christian Church. To it, indeed, the gradual development of its rest is subordinate, as a means to a higher end; and it must, accordingly, in the main determine all questions as to the right keeping of that holy day.

(B) What, in the largest sense of the word, is worship? I should answer that it is the conscious realization by the human nature, in mind and heart and spirit, and even through the body which

subserves these, of a spiritual communion of man with God—inherent from the beginning in his humanity as made in the Divine Image, but perfected and redeemed from sin and death in the Lord Jesus Christ. That communion, of course, in itself and in its regenerating power, underlies the whole of human life; it is to us as the spiritual air which we must breathe; in it (to apply in the highest sense St. Paul's well-known words) "we must live and move and have our being;" only in the strength of it can we work, only in the peace of it can we rest. But, while thus infinitely real in itself, it has to be realized to us through our own consciousness, in thought and will. St. Paul describes to us the whole development of that consciousness, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, in one of those passages characteristic of that great Epistle, which unites the most glowing prophetic enthusiasm with a philosophic coherence of thought. First, "Christ" is known as "dwelling in our hearts by faith"; then that faith is perfected, "rooted and grounded in love"; next, through the spiritual insight thus gained, we "apprehend the length and breadth and depth and height" of the Christian mystery, "knowing the love of Christ which passeth knowledge"; and so "are filled" up to the whole capacity of our finite nature "unto the fulness of God."[1] Such is the ideal growth of this consciousness of the communion with God. Were we perfect in the like-

[1] Eph. iii. 17–19.

ness of the true Son of Man, that consciousness would be to us, as it was to Him, an absorbing and unbroken consciousness; as we trust that it will be to us in heaven, when, seeing Him, and seeing God in Him, we shall be like Him for ever. But yet even for His humanity on earth this consciousness found its refreshment and sustenance in special periods of express worship. Still more, therefore, to our imperfection there is need from time to time of spiritual effort, to rescue it from the distractions and interferences which obscure it, and to renew it in its supreme reality; and this action—this turning (as we say) of the soul to God—is the essence of worship.

Such realization in itself is manifold, as our nature is manifold. It is ours through the mind, guided by the Spirit into the truth of God; it is ours through the imagination, in the sense of beauty, grandeur, mystery, through which the voice of God speaks to the soul; it is ours through the conscience, entering by sympathy into the Supreme Righteousness of God; it is ours through love, reflecting and returning the Supreme Love which enfolds us as "the glorious sky embracing all." In all its phases it is intensely personal; for it is the expression of the faith, which sees Him who is invisible, and which for us, as Christians, sees Him in the face and through the eyes of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

This manifold realization of God in Christ is to

us the source and inspiration of worship ; towards the ideal of it, manifested to us in His earthly life, we are to grow, and His saints in measure do surely grow. St. Paul, as I have said, holds up that ideal when he exhorts us "to pray without ceasing" in the continual aspiration after higher things; and "in everything to give thanks" in the continual sense of the spiritual gifts which God has already bestowed upon us. It needs not outward expressions: in its fulness it is perhaps incapable of expression ; there is a sense in which the words of the Prophet come home to us, "The Lord is in His holy temple ; let all the earth keep silence before Him."[1]

But yet this deep spiritual consciousness is irresistibly led to express itself in word and act ; and by this very expression (for such is the law of the human mind) to form, to clear, and to deepen itself. It is just this outward expression—naturally suggesting reverence of speech and gesture, clothing itself with all that suggests solemnity, and the union of humility and confidence in God, to the eye or ear—it is this which we ordinarily know as worship. Need I tell you that, like the consciousness of God, which it expresses, such worship, in various forms and degrees of purity and solemnity, is in possession of the whole field of human thought and practice ? For it is but the manifestation of the universal impulse to "feel after God and find

[1] Hab. ii. 20.

Him," in the certainty that "He is not far from any one of us," which He has implanted in every soul that He has made.

In the Church of Christ, as our own Service of public worship shows us, it has developed itself, in all the fulness and variety which belong to that complete revelation of God and man, and of God and man made One, which He has given us. In the communion with God, which worship thus realizes, there are (be it always remembered) two parts—the part of man and the part of God Himself. There is what we may call the part of man, expressive of the character of his twofold humanity —weak and sinful, yet still retaining the Divine Image and the sonship of God. Therefore, on the one hand, the very sense of a Divine Presence brings out in us the deep consciousness of our own littleness, frailty, sinfulness; and this pours itself out, first in humble and penitent confession, when seeing Him, like the old Patriarch, we cannot but "repent in dust and ashes";[1] and next, through the constant sense of our need and the constant yearning for better things, in the humility and earnestness of prayer. On the other, the confidence of sonship and the undying instinct of perfection, rise to the higher utterance of thanksgiving and praise, which is the imitation and anticipation of the perfect communion with Him, which we call heaven. And both are merged in

[1] Job xlii. 5, 6.

the solemn and thoughtful adoration, in which we lose self, alike in its sinfulness and in its holiness, in the consciousness of Him. All this, in various degrees and proportions, is man's part in the expression of the conscious communion with God. It is embodied alike in the simplest and the fullest worship—in the secret worship of the individual soul, and in the grandeur of the collective worship of humanity at large. But it implies necessarily something greater than itself, from the instinct of which, indeed, it starts, and up to the full sense of which it leads. There is what we may venture to call God's part, represented to us through His ministers, in our service of worship. It is the expression to us of His acceptance and blessing of this worship of His creatures; His answer of forgiveness and absolution to confession; His promise to grant, so far as He sees good for us, the supplications of our prayer; His Fatherly acceptance of our thanksgiving and praise; His gift of the light of His Word to our blindness, and of the new life of His grace to our weakness and dependence on Him; the Benediction in His Name, which crowns all our manifold worship with peace. This—and, I repeat, not less than this—is worship. In it we find the correlative expressions (if I may so venture to say) both of God's communion with man, and of man's communion with God. Need I remind you that it is possible in its fulness, only through the mediation

of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that accordingly it invokes continually His Divine Intercession.

(C) Let me pray you, moreover, to note how in virtue of this twofold character, there is to us in worship a perfect union of the rest and the activity, which are both characteristic of humanity as such. It, first, brings home to us in perfection that Divine institution of the ultimate rest in God, of which I have already spoken. You know how from His material Temple we seek to shut out all the turmoil and struggle and trouble of this world, so that it shall be lost in an absolute silence, or, if heard afar off, as in some great city cathedral, shall be so dulled and so subordinated as to be merely a vague undertone to the clear, solemn notes of prayer and praise. So in the spiritual worship, which that Temple enshrines, the soul, resting on God's Presence in word, in grace, in sacrament, passes from the trouble of life into peace—the peace of repentance, the peace of thanksgiving, the peace of adoration—which (as we say so often and so gladly) the world can neither give nor take away. How naturally does St. Paul base his encouragement to rejoice in the Lord, in spite of all sin and sorrow, on the exhortation, "Be anxious about nothing, but by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving lay your needs before Him," and promise us, through it, the peace which keeps heart and mind in Christ Jesus.[1] But this is not all. We see,

[1] Phil. iv. 6, 7.

next, that at the same time there is in worship the highest spiritual activity, calling out all the capacities of mind and heart and soul, in thought, in love, in aspiration—that activity interpenetrating the rest of peace, and even rising naturally out of it, in the desire to return something to Him who is felt as giving all to us. Thus it is worship, and, I think, worship alone, which fills and satisfies our whole nature. It is an earnest of that harmony of energy and repose—of receiving and giving—of the losing self and finding self in God—which in its perfection is the characteristic of heaven. The Divine institution, therefore, of worship is in effect something not only more sacred, but larger and more comprehensive than even the Divine institution of rest. It takes it up, and yet goes beyond it, just as our Lord's Day is a fuller and grander thing than the Sabbath which it has (so to speak) absorbed into itself.

It should be noted, also, that it concerns man, in that complex nature, at once individual and social, in which he is in a very true sense alone before God, and yet a living member of a community—in family, in city, in nation, in race—so that his individuality, sacred as it is, is yet stunted and imperfect, unless it participates in the corporate life of the whole. How strikingly are these two elements of his nature harmonized together in worship!

There is an individual worship of the soul—

"alone and yet not alone, because the Father is with it"—whether in actual solitude, or in the midst of our fellow-men. That worship cannot be too intensely personal, in the peculiarity of aspiration and need which belongs to each man's own life and character; it can hardly be too free, clothing itself in unstudied words, or without words, praying or "singing with melody, in the heart" alone. We know how the true Son of Man Himself found in such solitary worship the very breath of His own spiritual life, so that he retired to it from the companionship of men, as a refreshment from the toil of past service to them, as a new inspiration for the service of the future. No one, I suppose, who cannot at any moment—especially a moment of trial and emergency—lift up his soul to God in this silent individual worship, is really living the true Christian life.

But there is also the collective worship of the whole body, "governed and sanctified as a whole by the Spirit of God." According to the varieties of our membership in the various phases of human society, are the phases of this worship —the worship of each family and household—the worship of every community for serious and holy purposes, which we form for ourselves—the worship of each nation, which acknowledges itself a part of the Kingdom of God—the worship of the Church, at once congregational or national, and yet Catholic in its scope and character. That

collective worship, if it loses the fervour of individuality, yet glows with its own peculiar fervour of sympathy, and naturally raises the soul out of its own spiritual experiences to larger thoughts and aspirations. It goes beyond the intense personality of individual devotion; it merges that devotion without destroying it, as a larger unity of worship; it deals mainly with truths, needs, blessings common to the whole body of Christians, or perhaps to classes in that body who have special needs of weakness, suffering, and temptation, or special duties and responsibilities laid upon them. Naturally it clothes itself in form, actually or virtually liturgical; naturally it associates with itself some ritual of solemnity. The two elements of worship, like the two aspects of human nature to which they correspond, are distinct rather than separable. Individual devotion overflows into intercession for others, especially those nearest and dearest to us. Collective worship gives scope to the individual devotion, responsive or silent, which it presupposes; and it brings home to each man, in personal application, the truths and blessings which belong to all. But though thus inseparable, they are still distinct; each has its own peculiar power and function. There is no greater mistake than to suppose that either can supersede the other—that we can "forsake the assembling of ourselves together," if we seek God at home in personal worship, or that the participation in collective worship can be sufficient,

or can, indeed, have true vitality, if we know not how to be alone in devotion, face to face with Him who seeth in secret.

(D) This Divine institution of worship arising, as it does, out of the consciousness of an unbroken communion with God, cannot, of course, be limited to any one sacred season. It is the consecration of every day we live. For the individual soul, for the family or community, for each Church, as a Church, it opens the freshness of the morning activity; it closes the quiet restfulness of the evening. We note how, in the order of our own Church, the service of prayer and praise and thanksgiving is offered day by day; how in our cathedral and collegiate churches it clothes itself in all the beauty of ritual and music; how it has gone on, uninterrupted and in essence unchanged, through all the changeful centuries. Nay, not content with this, we see how in the Christian Church it has blossomed out, for special religious communities, into those Hours of Devotion which express the enthusiastic resolution of the Psalmist: "In the morning and at noonday and in the evening will I pray, and that instantly, and He shall hear my voice." "Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments." For thus the daily work which God has given us is itself blessed and hallowed; its lower activity at once rises to the higher spiritual energy of worship, and is tempered by its spiritual rest in God.

But yet, while this is profoundly true—and I would that its truth were more fully realized, and that all Christians would take fuller advantage of its blessing—yet still it is the Lord's Day, which is to us preëminently the great day of worship—the day which consecrates for us the whole week. So, as I have reminded you, it was from the beginning. It has been in all ages primarily the day, not so much of rest, as of worship. How could it be otherwise? For it is, as we have seen, the day of the Lord's Resurrection, and therefore of the spiritual life in us as risen in Him, which expresses itself in the worship of each soul as "hid with Christ in God." It is the day of the gift of the Holy Spirit to be the new birth of humanity, which has poured itself out in the worship of all races and tongues, first in the miraculous utterances of Pentecost and now in the universal worship of God, which goes up to Him in all the languages of human kind. It was gradually, as we have also seen, that it attracted to itself naturally the needful ordinance of the weekly rest, as a guard for its own fuller development—hushing the din of work and the strife of tongues, that the Voice of God to us may be heard, and the answering voice of our worship rise to Him.

And if it be asked what was and is the special worship, which from the beginning has thus hallowed the Lord's Day, there can be no doubt what, historically as well as ideally, is the true answer.

It is the celebration of that which is the one rite ordained by Himself, as His memorial—the breaking of the bread which is His Body, the drinking of the wine which is His Blood—the Divinely-appointed means of what we call pre-eminently "the Holy Communion" with Him, which is, as we have seen, the life of our spiritual life, the source of all spiritual worship. It was this which, as we learn from the first record of it by Justin Martyr, was from the first the hallowing worship of the Lord's day—not, indeed, confined to it, but gradually extending from it, till it came to hallow every day, almost every hour, in the life of the Church, and yet preëminently the means of being (with St. John) "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." We see, as we study Church history and Church literature, how its celebration grew out into the great liturgies of the East and West—all in variety of independence, yet all clearly traceable up to some ancient, surely Apostolic, original. We see in our own Service, drawn up on the ancient lines, how in it are embodied all the highest elements of worship—the earnestness of confession, the special gladness of Eucharistic thanksgiving, the voice of the Word of God to us, and the joyful answer in our Creed of faith, the praise "with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven," the prayer, not for ourselves only but for the whole Church. But we see also all these crowned by the supreme sacramental

mystery—the sacramental Memorial before God of the one atoning Sacrifice, with our own sacrifices of self-dedication and of thanksgiving, and the sacramental gift of His Body and Blood, in virtue of which He dwells in us and we in Him. Side by side with this, the essential Lord's Day service, have grown up those lesser Divine services—subsidiary to it, and in some degree preparatory for it—in which that day calls us especially to join. But it is this which is above all else the Lord's own institution of worship, and as such the true consecration of His own day. Would that all who desire to keep that day would better understand where its proper consecration lies!

(E) It is mainly for the sake of the Lord's Day as thus a day of special worship that we prize it so highly as a day of rest. True it is (as we saw in the last lecture) that the hallowed rest, even in itself, is not only a refreshment to our weakness, but an element in our spiritual education, a reflection of the Divine rest of contemplation, without which the work of life would be lowered and enfeebled, a weariness instead of a delight. But yet its chief blessing to us is this, that it sets us free for fulness of worship, rising from the lower interests, and even the lower blessings, of our every-day life, to the consciousness of our higher life in God.

This consecration of the Lord's Day by public worship is practically at this moment our great witness for God against secularization of our common

life. For us, accordingly, in England it is one main expression of the "National Christianity," which I believe still to be a great reality, in spite of religious perplexities and religious divisions. If it be (as we have seen that it is) of great importance to our national character to guard the Sunday rest, it is of infinitely greater importance to preserve and quicken the vitality of Sunday worship; and there is clearly need to impress this truth most earnestly on our own minds, and on the public opinion and feeling of our whole community, in our own days—clearly critical days of strong contrast, in their moral and religious aspects. For there is on this subject a striking contrast of hopefulness on the one hand, of deep anxiety on the other.

On the one hand, as the result of the great religious movements of the nineteenth century, there has been in our own Church, as in other religious Communions, a striking revival, both in form and in spirit, in respect of the public worship on the Lord's Day. The splendid Services, which crowd our cathedrals, and especially our great London Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, Sunday after Sunday, would have seemed incredible some fifty years ago. The humbler Services of our parish churches have shown cheering signs of similar revival over the length and breadth of the land. More especially we may rejoice in the remarkable increase of weekly celebrations of the

Holy Communion, as indicating the growth of a true conception of the Divinely-appointed worship, which is the peculiar consecration of the Lord's Day. The sacredness of worship, as distinct from that of preaching the Word, has established itself more firmly than ever in the minds and consciences of our people. The outward developments in Church architecture and equipment and in Church ritual are in the main the external symbols of this internal consciousness, even if there may be in some cases risk of their overlaying it by excess. The similar development of Church music—so great as to threaten the same danger in a still higher degree—yet has, on the whole, told powerfully for congregationality and fervour in worship. In all this we trace hopeful signs of the times, for which we may well "thank God and take courage."

But yet how far is this consecration of the Lord's Day by worship from the true ideal of what should be in a community professedly Christian!

In regard to the great masses of our poorer and less educated people, it is hard to exaggerate our deep anxiety and sorrow in knowing that, even on the Lord's Day, so large a proportion of them never enter any House of God for any kind of service of worship to Him. As far as our own Church is concerned, the fault may lie in part with the form and character of worship, as imperfectly intelligible, imperfectly congenial to their thoughts

and needs. So far it imposes on the Church herself the duty of thoughtful consideration and reform ; it calls for greater elasticity and freedom of development. But unhappily the true cause lies deeper. It is that in the main they do not care to come—mainly, I think, from simple ignorance as to the duty and blessing of public worship, and the reality of the grace which it ministers through Word and Sacrament—perhaps also from antagonism of doubt and unbelief—perhaps from absorption in the interests and the hard struggles of their daily life—perhaps from too eager a desire to relieve these by relaxation and amusement. Now I do not venture to say that such neglect argues an utter want in them of religious faith and religious life. For I believe that, perhaps in vague and rudimentary development, they do lie deep in the hearts of our English people ; and it seems to me that the very tenour of so many lives among them—in their patience, their kindliness, their self-sacrifice, their sense of duty, their acceptance of the providential order of things even their constant demand that our professed Christianity should be more truly Christian in spirit—argues some real power, against all frailty and sin, of the higher humanity in them, which is the image of God. There is in these things the *testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ.* I believe that He knows, enlightens, pardons many such souls, that at best only know Him vaguely

and dimly.[1] But yet it is clear that this neglect of Divine worship, on the day which especially calls for it and makes it possible, must not only imply a low condition and imperfect conception of spiritual life, but must starve and maim what spiritual life there is. I sigh over the empty or half-filled churches, which open their doors in vain, while the streets swarm with people, and places of mere amusement and excess are thronged.

[1] There was a singularly interesting article on this subject in the *Contemporary Review* of November 1904, written by a Lady Superintendent of District Nurses, working in the poorer quarters of London, which concludes with the following statement:—"Many years' experience of the poorest of the respectable poor has convinced me that deep and true religion is commonly found among them; of which the chief tenets are: The existence of a Supreme Being intimately concerned with the life of men, and best served by loving submission and faithfulness to the homeliest duties; the spiritual efficacy of prayer; and triumphant faith in the immortality of the soul." It will be seen that in this description there is no direct reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, although it is only through Him that these three cardinal points in the fatherhood of God, the mysterious efficacy of prayer, and the certainty of life and immortality are fully realized. There is no expression of any deep sense of sin, and of the need of salvation from sin; nor is there any adequate conception of the means, through which His salvation is ministered by His Church. It is at best a very imperfect Christianity. But yet if it be sincerely held, it must tell with a dominant power on character and conduct, and we cannot but believe that it will be accepted through Him, who died for all, even though they know Him not or know Him but imperfectly.

I rejoice when even the simplest, the crudest, the most imperfect service raises them out of this apathy, and gives them if it be but a glimpse of the Divine things, which even the most elementary religious teaching, even the roughest religious worship must bring home to them, as infinitely above the things of the flesh and of the world. What would we not give, if we could see our Lord's Day more truly a day of worship, reproducing, however imperfectly, the early days, when all continued steadfast not only in the "Apostolic doctrine and fellowship," but "in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers"? For ourselves what thought and sacrifice would be too great, if in any way we could make our Services more effective to meet the spiritual needs of our people, and to draw their hearts and minds to God? But, above all, how earnestly must we pray for that which alone can realize this high ideal—the fuller outpouring upon us and upon them of the converting and reviving power of the Spirit of God!

But this is not all. We cannot but trace—with less of pity and indulgence and more of blame and sorrow—the undoubted growth of a similar neglect of Sunday worship, for the sake of rest and relaxation, in those who have the responsibility of greater leisure and higher education. It may perhaps be simply one of the signs, which seem to mark this present time, as one of reaction from the enthusiasm of those times of revival to which I have alluded.

It may be due to the greater craving for amusement and excitement evidently characteristic of our day. It may be one indication of the unsettlement of religious thought and practice. But from whatever cause it comes, we cannot but recognize the unhappy fact of this neglect, breaking old grave and wholesome conventions—a neglect which was unheard of, and would have seemed impossible, in the last generation. Nor can we fail to see in it an ominous sign of secularization of thought and life in the rising generation, of those who will have leading influence upon the whole future of England. And not less significant and perhaps hardly less mischievous is the practice which seems to be growing up among those who are unwilling to throw off all religious profession, of hurrying through some brief service of worship, like the hasty "Hunting Mass" of days gone by, and then giving over all the remainder of the day to relaxation and amusement. I do not, of course, measure the reality or acceptability of worship by the length of time given to it; I would not speak lightly of even this slight homage to the holiness of the Lord's Day. But yet surely it is but a scanty and grudging service, unworthy to be laid before Him. Nay, for the religious effect—even for the moral and educational effect—on character, must we not plead for that willing devotion of some large and serious proportion of the Holy Day to the worship of God, which was at least the

ideal, and in some degree the practice, of earlier times?

I have spoken hitherto, in respect of the Divine institution of worship, only of the public worship of the Church—partly because it is more easily examined as a test of religious conditions—partly because we cannot but remember that our Lord Himself has especially blessed it by the promise of His Divine Presence in the midst of us. But it must never be forgotten how closely allied to it, and in practice all but inseparable from it, is the hallowing of the Lord's Day by private individual worship; by some speciality of prayer; by quiet meditation on the things of God, especially through the Word of God; by a resolute turning of our thoughts upwards, above the occupations, the studies, the interests, which must absorb us more or less in the hard pressure of the week-day work. There was something, after all, in that old distinction of Sunday books,[1] Sunday occupations, even Sunday amusements, which seems, I fear, to be thought antiquated and obsolete now. Here, indeed, as in other aspects of the subject, we may with advantage accept a wider definition of that which may rightly fall under that distinction, and tend to a freer and more varied edification. In regard especially to Sunday books, there is much wisdom

[1] There was an admirable example of such distinctively Sunday books in Macmillans' "Sunday Library," published some years ago.

in the well-known saying that for such edification we need not merely directly religious books, but perhaps even more books on common subjects, written in a religious spirit. But the distinction itself has surely a spiritual value. It is at least a testimony to the duty and privilege of so rising spiritually with Christ our Risen Lord as to reflect on the whole tone of His day, even in its lighter aspects, something of the quiet and reverent thoughtfulness, something of the heavenly-mindedness, which its leading idea of worship should suggest and inspire. That quiet individual worship, direct and indirect, on the Lord's Day—it may be perhaps more difficult to offer from the heart; it may be more uncongenial to the restlessness of modern days, to which quiet is apt to seem dulness; it may require more advance towards spiritual maturity than the joining in the public worship, which carries the soul on with it, giving it more direction and more help for the access to God. But I am convinced that it is not only by its very change of thought and emotion a great spiritual refreshment, but also a thing of infinite importance to the development of the true Christian character, in that measure of independent strength and freedom before God, which is the ideal of the New Testament. God forbid that we should lose it!

(F) After all, it is this Divine institution of worship, collective and individual, uniting, as I have said, the highest spiritual activity with the truest and deepest rest, which is the real hallowing

of the Lord's Day and its one true safeguard from the encroachments of the world. It is this, moreover, rather than any formal code of rules of observance, which determines the suitability or unsuitability, the good effect or the evil, of all other Sunday occupations for ourselves or for others. Some simple rules there may well be, provided that they are so freely used, as to be a guard and help to liberty rather than a bondage. But it is probably impossible to draw a hard and fast line, which can be rightly applied to all characters and all needs and circumstances. Yet in regard to these Sunday occupations there are two leading principles which are clear enough. They must not crowd out the supreme devotion of worship or depose it from its right place of preëminence; and they must be such as will not jar with its leading and inspiring tone. Let these two dominant principles be grasped and followed out, and then under their shadow all other things will freely settle themselves, varying according to the circumstances and character of each life.

Let me add that this free and reverent hallowing of the Lord's Day is one chief safeguard of the spirituality, for which it seems to me that we have to bear an earnest witness in days like our own. For we are greatly, perhaps increasingly, tempted to secularity, not to denial but to forgetfulness of God, in speculative Agnosticism or in practical worldliness. This world is fuller

every day of new discovery, of busier energy, of larger variety of interests, of greater vividness of sensation; the thought of the higher world, both as it is around and within us now, and as it is to be revealed in the Hereafter, is certainly compassed about for us with an ever-growing sense of mystery; the old simplicity of religious faith is apt to be troubled and dimmed as to its definiteness by the very enlargement of our conceptions of God and man. How infinitely full of blessing, therefore, the recurrence of our great day of worship, sounding, like some great Church bell over the bustle of the crowded streets, the old solemn note of call to the realization of His Presence; and, when that call is obeyed, quieting and spiritualizing the soul in the solemnity of that Presence, as felt in the silence of individual devotion, hailed by the collective utterance of praise and prayer, known, as in no other way it can be known, by sacramental communion through and in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. That blessing be it ours to receive into our heart of hearts; for that blessing to bear witness to the world; and for ourselves and for others to guard it, and the rest from work which it needs, as a pearl of great price.

(G) With this I would close these lectures, earnestly trusting that under God's blessing our study—a "short study," as I have said, "of a great subject"—may serve in some degree to clear

our views and perhaps to guide our practice. It may be well briefly to summarize the conclusions to which that study has led us. First in importance (as I think) is the clear conception of the historical relation between the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment and the Lord's Day in the Christian Church, and the ideal relation between the Divine institution of rest set forth in the one, and the yet Diviner institution of worship, which is the living principle of the other. We have to guard alike against the old error of identification of the two, and perhaps even more against the later error (by reaction) of separation in fact and in idea. Next, in regard to practical observance, it is essential to distinguish between formal obedience under law and free, glad adhesion of the spirit, using and moulding law, but rising above it. Thirdly, it is certainly necessary to consider more fully than we are apt to do what rest—the rest hallowed as imitation of the "rest of God"—really implies; what its function in our spiritual education is, and what aspects of Sunday observance it comprehends, in variety and yet in true spiritual order. Lastly, and perhaps above all, we have to recognize the true nature of worship, and the absolute prëeminence of the Divine Idea of worship, as alone rightly using and guarding the Sunday rest, as dominating and determining all questions of the right use of our great Christian holy-day. These considera-

tions bear, indeed, on the true character of our spiritual life as a whole, in its right harmony of work and rest in God. But they should especially bring out to us the true function of the Lord's Day observance, as like the old Sabbath, at once "hallowed and blessed" — "hallowed" in its sacredness before God, and "blessed" in its blessing to our humanity. If this has been brought out in any degree—if any light has come to us on a subject of great difficulty and of greater importance—we may indeed be thankful to God, and hail it as coming from Him, the Lord of "the Lord's Day," who is the Sun of Righteousness and the Light of the World.

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